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MOUNTSTUART ELPHINSTONE

VOL. I.

LONDON: PRINTED BY
SPOTTISWOODE AND CO., NEW-STREET SQUARE
AND PARLIAMENT STREET



LIFE
OF
THE HONOURABLE
MOUNTSTUART ELPHINSTONE

BY SIR T. E. COLEBROOKE, BART., M.P.

IN TWO VOLUMES—VOL. I.

WITH PORTRAITS AND MAPS

LONDON
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET
1884

Fifth Edition, with Map, 8vo. 18s.

THE HISTORY OF INDIA. The Hindu and Mahometan Periods. By the Honble. MOUNTSTUART ELPHINSTONE. *New Edition*. With Notes and Additions by E. B. COWELL, M.A., late Professor of Sanskrit at Cambridge University.

PREFACE.

SOME EXPLANATION seems required of the delay in the appearance of a biography of an eminent Indian statesman, whose active career belongs to the early part of the present century. Shortly after Mr. Elphinstone's death I commenced a memoir of his life and services, which appeared in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of 1861. I entered on this task at the instance of the learned Director of the Society, the late Professor H. H. Wilson, who urged me to prepare for the Journal a more extended sketch of Mr. Elphinstone's career than could be compressed within the space usually allotted to an obituary notice. In this I was encouraged by some of Mr. Elphinstone's relatives, and from them, and from friends who had served under or with him in India, I obtained some interesting particulars relating to his career, which appeared in this sketch. Before, however, committing myself to this slight work, I thought it my duty to inquire of his nephew, Lord Elphinstone, then at Bombay, whether he had it in view to make use of the papers, which had passed into his hands, for the purpose of a biography. He informed me in reply that he was not sure how far this was possible, as his uncle had left some instructions which seemed to preclude the publication of many of the papers which he had left. He added that he would examine them, and consider how far the restriction was intended to apply, before he could come to a decision. When I met Lord Elphinstone, on his return from India, he expressed to me the same hesitation

as to their publication, and he informed me that he had made some progress in the collection of his minutes and despatches with a view to publication ; but Lord Elphinstone's death, which followed shortly after his return to this country, put an end for a time to this plan, and I had less hesitation in giving at once to the Asiatic Society the memoir which was now completed, and which had expanded considerably beyond my original design.

Mr. Elphinstone's letter is as follows :—

‘ Hookwood . September 18, 1856.

‘ My dear Elphinstone,—In a note accompanying my will I have explained to my executors that, though some of my papers are copied fair, none of them are intended for publication, or fit for such a purpose. I might have added a request that they should not be handed over bodily to authors collecting materials for lives or other works relating to India, unless in cases where some reliance can be placed on the judgment of the person to whom they are entrusted. It is not pleasant to people who have the bad habit of keeping all their papers to think that their own commonplaces, or the confidential communications of their correspondents, are liable to be laid before the public ; and I have seen many instances (Indian as well as European) in which very little regard has been paid to such considerations when something was wanted to complete a second volume.

‘ It is not worth breaking the seal of my will for this suggestion. I therefore make it the subject of a separate letter.

‘ Your affectionate

‘ M. ELPHINSTONE.’

After Lord Elphinstone's death the examination of the papers was undertaken by one of his executors, and I entertained a hope that this would be followed by some publication worthy of Mr. Elphinstone's reputation ; but on meeting that gentle-

man some years afterwards he informed me that he had given up the thought of writing a life. I could not but feel some regret that Mr. Elphinstone, who took so great a part in the foundation of our Indian Empire, and whose character stood so high among his contemporaries that he was twice offered the Governor-Generalship, should alone of our elder Indian statesmen remain without a biographer;¹ and, after some hesitation, I wrote to the present Lord Elphinstone, offering to examine any number of papers that he might entrust to me. All I contemplated at the time was to make very full extracts from them, which would enable Lord Elphinstone, or any person whom he might consult, to judge of their value. Lord Elphinstone at once committed to my care the Indian journals of his relative, and many volumes of official and other correspondence, and I applied myself to the task.

The journals, on a cursory examination, seemed to me to contain matter which would be of public interest, as throwing light on the life and character of the writer, and on the public events in which he took a part. There were besides, among the papers, copies of the most important despatches written during a very trying period of his career, and a volume of miscellaneous correspondence carried on about the same time, both of which seemed to me of such interest that I wrote to Lord Elphinstone expressing my opinion of their value, and of that of the journals; and he at once placed in my hands another batch of papers, allowing me at the same time to have access to the whole collection, which was very voluminous. I now entered on the task of examination and making extracts with new zeal, and found myself gradually and almost involuntarily committed to a biography.

¹ I am not to be understood as undervaluing Sir W. Kaye's memoir of Elphinstone in his *Lives of Indian Officers*. Having access to the papers of several of Mr. Elphinstone's contemporaries, he was enabled to give several interesting letters, and complete a very spirited and excellent sketch of Mr. Elphinstone's career; but it can only be regarded as a sketch.

I could not have attempted to wade through this mass of materials were it not for the assistance I derived from the catalogue which was at the time in the course of preparation by Mr. W. Fraser of the Register House, Edinburgh, who had charge of the muniments of the family, and was engaged in the preparation of a report upon them for the Historical Manuscripts Commission, a copy of which was entrusted to me, with the permission of the Commissioners. The labour of selection was thus rendered comparatively easy. In this part of my task my responsibility has pressed on me no further than weighs on any person who undertakes to lay historical facts before the public, and assumes the care of the reputation of a great man. In these papers there was nothing confidential, nothing to be withheld, except what was obviously of no public interest. With another part of the materials, and a very important part, I have had a delicate charge laid upon me. The injunctions laid by Mr. Elphinstone on his executors had special reference to his private correspondence, and to his journals.

Any difficulty with regard to the first was easily settled. I have not opened a single one of a very large collection, carefully arranged and docketed, some of them from persons of eminence, but others evidently on private matters, with which I had no concern. I claim no credit for thus abstaining, as I had ample materials entrusted to me independent of them. A more serious question arose with regard to the journals.

They consist for the most part of a record of every-day occurrences, and follow the routine of an Indian life. He makes a note of the incidents of the day, gives remarks on books, describes the state of his health and medical treatment, adds occasional reflections on the hopes and fears of his career, and resolutions as to conduct both private and public. When he is in camp, the marches are regularly recorded, and descriptions are given of places, buildings, antiquities, and scenery. The latter denote a genuine love of nature. He laid

down a rule to abstain from referring to his public work or duties, and this is only occasionally broken through.

Such were the journals, which were kept, with occasional intermission, during an eventful Indian career, and followed up after his retirement. There is no indication that, with certain exceptions, they were intended for the perusal of friends. Indeed, the freedom with which they were written, and the frequent reference to his own feelings and weaknesses, show that the work was persevered in owing to the pleasure which it gave him to renew the reminiscences of events and feelings of former years. The exception to the general character of these volumes consists in the account of his travels on his homeward journey. They were carefully copied by a clerk, as if for the perusal of his friends.

The selection I have made from the journals has been sparing, and from their character attended with some difficulty. In one respect my task has been an easy one. There was nothing to keep back. Any expressions of anger or annoyance at the conduct of others are very rare, while the evidence these journals afford of the warmth and unselfishness of the writer's nature is so complete that the publication of the whole journal, if the contents were of a kind to interest the public, would do him honour. With this remark I must leave the reader to decide whether I have properly discharged the trust imposed on me.

Besides these bulky materials, I received from Lord Elphinstone a series of letters addressed to Mr. E. Strachey, of the Indian Civil Service, with whom Mr. Elphinstone corresponded through life, and which were returned to him after that gentleman's death. I have made a selection from another series addressed to Mr. William Erskine, which were intrusted to me by that gentleman's son, and also from various papers that have been put in my hands by members of Mr. Elphinstone's family. I have been enabled by the courtesy of Lord

Hartington, when he held the office of Secretary of State for India, to have access to the records of the India Office, and received permission from the Duke of Wellington to search for any of the letters addressed by Mr. Elphinstone to his father after his appointment to Nagpoor in 1804, but unfortunately no trace of the latter now exists.

I must in conclusion return my acknowledgments to the Persian scholars who have aided me in interpreting the phrases and quotations with which both letters and journals abound. In some cases the interpretation is my own, and if an error occasionally appears I beg to be held responsible for it.

I have also to acknowledge my obligation to Mr. Fraser for the assistance I have derived from his arrangement of this mass of papers, and for his report on them and other papers belonging to the family. The short account of the family with which this biography commences was prepared by me from the history of the family in Douglas's 'Peerage of Scotland,' and had the advantage of Mr. Fraser's revision and correction.

As regards the spelling of names of men and places I have followed no uniform plan. Mr. Elphinstone's spelling was that of Gilchrist, which prevailed at the beginning of the present century; but it was not always consistent, and in his History of India he followed a plan more in accordance with modern usage. I have accepted the latter as my rule, occasionally deviating from it when another mode has been established in popular usage. I have experienced the greatest difficulty in deciphering names in letters and journals, the latter especially. The handwriting was bad, and that of the journals sometimes a scrawl, so that one can well understand it was intended for no eyes but his own. I have travelled over more miles in attempting to trace in the survey maps of India the names of places in the journals than ever Mr. Elphinstone did in his many wanderings, and with very unsatisfactory results, and I trust to the forbearance of the Indian reader if he detects many mistakes.

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PLAN OF THE BATTLE OF ASSYE *to face page 70*

PLAN OF THE BATTLE OF KIRKEE, FROM BLACKER'S

'MAHRATTA WAR' *to face page 384*

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Errata.

- Page 3, line 16, *for* hear of the line *read* the hem of line.
,, 19 In a note, three lines from the bottom, *for* show *read* shown.
,, 61, line 8, *for* writ *read* written
,, 69, ,, 19, *after* wounded *insert* in the sycc.
,, 87, ,, 7, *for* their *read* these.
,, 157, ,, 1, *delete* as he told me many years afterwards.
,, 193, ,, 2 from the bottom, *for* immediate *read* intermediate.
,, 213, ,, 11, *after* same *insert* time.
,, 243, ,, 16, *for* its *read* the.
,, 250, ,, 2, *delete* over them
,, 284, ,, 22, *for* Dowbetabad *read* Dowlatabad.
,, 289, ,, 28, *after* Raja *insert* of.
,, 346, ,, 13, *for* more *read* were.

LIFE
OF THE HONOURABLE
MOUNTSTUART ELPHINSTONE.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY LIFE, 1779-1799

FAMILY HISTORY—EDUCATION—LETTERS—SAILS FOR INDIA—LIFE AT
BENARES—ZEMAUN SHAH—A NARROW ESCAPE.

MOUNTSTUART ELPHINSTONE was a cadet of a noble Scottish family, whose origin is traced by antiquarians as far back as the thirteenth century. The name, which is a local one, derived from the lands of that name in the county of Haddington, occurs in many ancient charters, the oldest bearing date about 1250. The authentic history of the family commences with Sir William de Elphinstone, who died before 1397, and whose son William had a charter from Sir William de Lindsay, dominus de Byres, granting to him and his three brothers, Alexander, Norman, and James Elphinstone, the lands of Pittendrech, in Stirlingshire. The original charter is not dated, but the precept of sasine following upon it is dated September 6, 1397. From Sir William de Elphinstone the present family trace a direct descent. Little is recorded of Sir William and his immediate descendants beyond the fact that they held lands in several counties, and took part in the wars of the time. Alexander, eldest grandson of Sir William Elphinstone, fell in a combat which took place between the English and the Scots

under the Earl of Angus, at Piperdean, on September 10, 1435. Alexander Elphinstone, the fifth in descent from Sir William, was created a lord of Parliament in 1509, and fell with his royal master, King James IV., at Flodden, September 9, 1513. The second Lord Elphinstone also died in the field, at the disastrous battle of Pinkie, September 10, 1547.

Several members of the family have at different times held high offices of state. The first who rose to distinction in public life was William Elphinstone, sometime Bishop of Ross, afterwards of Aberdeen, who was the younger son of William Elphinstone of Blythswood, and a great-grandson of Sir William Elphinstone above referred to. In 1478 he was appointed Lord High Chancellor, but held the office only for a short time, until the death of King James III., to whose party he was attached, in opposition to that of the Prince, afterwards King James IV. Bishop Elphinstone also acted as a privy councillor and an ambassador to various foreign Courts; but he enjoys a better title to fame as the founder of the University of Aberdeen. He obtained from Pope Alexander VI. a papal Bull of Privileges in 1494, but the real date of the foundation of his University was 1506. The Bishop became its first Chancellor, enlarged the endowment provided by King James IV., and issued the scheme which bears the title of the first foundation of the college.

James, the third son of Robert, third Lord Elphinstone, became a Lord of Session in 1586. In 1598 he was appointed Secretary of State. In 1604 King James VI. conferred upon him the lands which had belonged to the Abbey of Balmerinoch. He was also raised to the peerage, and became the founder of a new branch of the Elphinstone family, under the title of Balmerinoch. This name is familiar to readers of the Jacobite history of the last century, from the part taken by the sixth and last Lord Balmerinoch in support of the House of Stuart. He joined the Earl of Mar in 1715, and in 1745 he attached himself to Prince Charles Edward. For thus displaying his loyalty to the Stuarts he was beheaded on Tower Hill in August 1746.

Alexander, fourth Lord Elphinstone, was for some time High Treasurer of Scotland, and was appointed one of the four Commissioners to treat about a union with England in 1604. The sixth Lord Elphinstone was, on account of his loyalty to King Charles I., fined by Cromwell in the sum of 1,000*l*.

The later history of the family shows the same record of activity in the service of their country. Charles, the ninth Baron, served under Marlborough from 1706 to the Peace of Utrecht.

In the next generation the possessions of the family were augmented by the union of the tenth baron with Clementina, the sole heiress of the sixth Earl of Wigton, and representative of the house of Fleming. The lady was descended, on her mother's side, from the Earls Marischal of Scotland, Lady Mary Keith, the mother of Lady Clementina, being the eldest daughter of the ninth Earl Marischal. Lady Clementina was thus heir of the line of George Keith, tenth Earl Marischal, the friend of Frederick the Great of Prussia, and last of the line who held this hereditary office.

The eleventh Baron, the father of Mountstuart, served under Wolfe in Canada, and was wounded in the neck at Montmorency. His uncle, George Keith Elphinstone, entered the navy, and rose to high distinction. After a long and brilliant series of services he was raised to the peerage, and is better known to fame as Admiral Lord Keith. The fighting qualities of the family remained conspicuous to the last. Mountstuart's elder brother entered the army and rose to the rank of general. His second brother took the name of Fleming, entered the navy, and saw much service. He became latterly Governor of Chelsea Hospital. Several of Mountstuart's cousins entered the navy, and two of the number were lost at sea.

Though no man was more free from aristocratic pride, nor more prompt to measure men by their sterling qualities, yet there appeared in his conversation, as in his letters, something of the feeling which belonged to the old Scottish nobility, and assigned the foremost place to a life of military adventure, and a disposition to resent the material tendencies of the age

in which he lived. 'He should have been a frere if he could not be a knight,' is a phrase I find in more than one letter, and on one occasion he betrays some indignation, though expressed in a jocular tone, at his uncle's having taken to trade, an act which was opposed to the traditions of his family, and led to his own banishment from home. And yet it was to this uncle that India owes the determination of the career of one of its leading statesmen. William Elphinstone commanded a ship in the service of the East India Company, and became one of its directors, and Lord Elphinstone was glad to avail himself of the opening which was offered to two of his sons in the Civil Service of India.

'My early desire,' he once said to me, 'was to be a soldier, though I had thought while young of more than the life of a subaltern.' I cannot, however, but think that he felt 'an inward prompting' that he was intended by nature for a soldier's life. When fairly launched in life his thoughts soared higher than in his boyhood. Speaking one day of the day-dreams in which I used to indulge when young, he eagerly questioned me about them. 'For my part,' he said, 'I dreamt of winning battles that would throw into the shade the great struggles of the age.' 'In youth we are all for glory,' he said on another occasion. It will be noted in this narrative, that after accompanying General Wellesley through the campaign of 1803, the great captain, who had appreciated his secretary's turn for war, expressed his approval in emphatic terms, and told him that he had mistaken his profession and ought to have been a soldier. And yet these soldier-like qualities formed only one phase of a many-sided character. He was the member of a service which is trained by the exigencies of Indian life to exchange the pen for the sword at the call of duty. But he was more than this. I would apply to him the description Milton gives of our first parent.

'For contemplation he and valour formed.'

He was essentially a man of thought as well as of action; for his love of letters and his thirst for knowledge were intense.

These and other traits of character will, I trust, be illustrated in the biography I am about to commence.

I regret that it is not in my power to fulfil the common duty of biographers of giving Mr. Elphinstone's place of birth. I have failed to discover any mention of his birth or baptism in the records of the parish where his family usually resided, and the reader must be content to know that he was born on October 6, 1779, and that he passed the first years of his life at Cumbernauld House in Dumbartonshire, an ancient seat of the Flemings. His father was a general officer, and for some time held the office of Governor of Edinburgh Castle, where the family used occasionally to reside. By his marriage with the daughter of Lord Ruthven he had eight children, four of them being sons, of whom Mountstuart was the youngest.

The few particulars I have collected of his early life and education confirm the impression of those who knew him when his character was formed, that he was a self-trained man, and that his love for literature was self-sown. Until his twelfth year his studies were pursued at his father's house, under a tutor, Mr. Stark, afterwards a minister of the Church of Scotland. Mr. Stark accompanied Mountstuart to Edinburgh, where he attended the High School, in the years 1791-92, and his education was completed at a school in Kensington, under Dr. Thompson, a teacher of some repute, with whom he remained for about two years, until his departure for India in 1795. To none of these schools or preceptors can we trace more than the germs of that patient, persevering study and scholarship that distinguished him through life. The description that has been given to me by those who knew him when young is of a clever and rather idle boy, full of energy and spirits, fond of desultory reading, but averse to systematic study. His relative, Mr. John Loch, formerly a director of the East India Company, wrote to me as follows:—'My impression of him, when we met in our respective holidays at the house of our uncle Adam, was that he was very quick and clever, and could make himself master of any subject; but at that time he was not a student, though very fond of general reading. He was very fond of fun,

and inclined to be riotous in his play. I mention these small facts, as he was so different in after life.' Another of his early friends, who knew him at his father's house at Cumbernauld, confirms this account of his love for fun, and states that he used to assume the lead among his young companions, and was at the head of all the little boys in the neighbourhood in their adventurous expeditions. The following brief note is from the pen of his cousin, Mrs. Thompson, sister of Mr. John Adam, who accompanied Mountstuart to India, and rose to the highest distinction in the Indian Civil Service:—

'Mountstuart seemed to be full of observation and mischief, but not much inclined to study. I can just recollect him at our house the few days before they left England, and I perfectly remember the contrast between the quiet, gentle manner of my brother, and Mountstuart's energy and spirits. I think he used to quote Shakespeare much, and also doggerel rhyme. I remember hearing my father say he was clever enough for anything, but an *idle dog*. Who could suppose that could have been said of Mountstuart?'

I am unwilling to believe that he could have received any part of his education at Edinburgh, without deriving some of the force and independence of his character from his intercourse with his fellow-students at this period. He was the contemporary and friend of Francis Horner and the late Lord Murray, from the latter of whom I once received some slight reminiscences of their boyhood. They were fellow-scholars and friends; and the intimacy thus begun was renewed upon Mr. Elphinstone's return from India, and cherished by them both to the end of their lives.

We know that Edinburgh sent forth at this period a band of energetic spirits, who rose to distinction at the bar, in literature, and in public life. It is pleasing to find the name of Elphinstone added to the list of self-trained men who threw such lustre on the place of their common education.

Another trait of his character when young may deserve preserving, and adds to the contrast between his youth and mature age. Throughout life he was a Whig; but when very

young his political principles were so ardent that he would sometimes refer to his extravagant admiration of Charles Fox as one of the errors of his youth. One of Lord Murray's early recollections of him was of a little boy in grey, who wore his hair long in imitation of the French Republicans, and was fond of singing 'Ça ira.' Another of his early friends, General Sir Robert Houston, with whom he sailed for India, and who became, in later years, Lieutenant-Governor of the Military College at Addiscombe, has furnished a few reminiscences of their long intimacy, which will be noted at their proper places in this biography. The first refers to their early life. The letter is addressed to Mr. Elphinstone's nephew:—

'My dear Mr. Erskine,—Your uncle is seldom out of my thoughts, and I have a melancholy satisfaction in recalling the scenes in which we were associated during a period of more than seventy years; for I can look back to the time we were playfellows at Cumbernauld.

'He was always full of fun, both as a boy and man, but never riotous. You know he was always a Whig of the old school, but he narrowly escaped being a republican—the Governor's house in Edinburgh Castle overlooked the ground where the French prisoners were allowed to walk, and he was fond of talking to them and listening to their revolutionary songs. I remember some of us, in the early part of his Indian career, sending him a red nightcap and tricolor cockade, addressed to "The Honble. M. E., *alias* Tom Paine."'

I add some amusing details on the same subject from another of his early friends, the late Mr. John Russell, of Edinburgh:—

'Mr. Elphinstone's father, Lord Elphinstone, then an officer in the army, was, at the time I first knew his son, the Governor of Edinburgh Castle, where he resided with his family in the Governor's house. This must have been about, or some time after, the breaking out of the French Revolution; at least it must have been some time after our first engagements with the

French at sea, for there were then confined in the castle a great number of French prisoners, some of whom made a little support to themselves by manufacturing snuff-boxes and little toys of wood. From being intimate with Mountstuart, I was frequently with him in the castle, and our great amusement was to traffic with the prisoners for their wares, and perhaps practise our small French, which we were then learning at school, and talking to them. This led to their singing French songs to us, which we learnt from them; and, as they were zealous Republicans, their songs were all to that tune. Nothing amused Mountstuart so much as going about the castle singing these songs, which consisted, *inter alia*, of the "Marseillaise," "Ça ira," "Les Aristocrates à la Lanterne," and the other democratic songs then in vogue in France.

'The old officers looked askance at this outrage on their loyal feelings; and Mountstuart, if he had not been the Governor's son, would probably have been checked in a way he would not have liked; but I do not recollect anything more than possibly a private reprimand having been inflicted. He was at all times a very lively, sprightly boy, with a light figure and curly golden locks, and very good-looking. He left Edinburgh very early after that, and I did not of course see him again till his return from India, when we renewed our former acquaintance.'

The school at Kensington at which Mountstuart completed his education is said by Mr. John Loch, in the note from which I have quoted, to have been one of some repute. This may have been the case as regards instruction, but the life the boys led there is described by him as rather a rough one, and the schoolboy letters which were carefully preserved by his mother are full of home longings. This trait, indeed, appears again in his letters on his voyage to India, and during the first years of his residence there.

None of these letters gives the year in which it was written. The selection which I have made is arranged from such internal evidence as they offer.

‘Kensington, March 26

‘My dear Mama,—I was glad to hear by a letter to my uncle that papa continues well. Uncle Keith arrived in town some days ago, and I saw him the morning after his arrival. There is a report that he is to be offered a red ribbon. Do write me when you come to town, and how everybody *at home* is. As I know no game, and if I did, would not play, I spend my time here in walking up and down the playground talking with Charles, singing, or *dansant la Carmagnole*. Give my love to papa and my sisters.

‘I am, your affectionate son,

‘M. ELPHINSTONE.’

‘Kensington, March.

‘My dear Mama,—I am extremely happy to inform you that my uncle has got me appointed to Bengal, and on Saturday last he sent for me home, and told me that I was to go with this fleet, which sails in six weeks. He also desired me to apply to writing and ciphering, and to leave off Greek. This letter will not show that I have obeyed him, for it is wrote in a great hurry, and even that hurry will not permit me to say half of what I wish to say, for the dinner-bell will ring this moment. I am, you may be sure, very much obliged to my uncle, and very happy to be appointed, in spite of all the cockades in the world, which are never to be compared to Bengal. But the worst of all is that I will not be able to return to Scotland for want of time, and so have no possibility of seeing you and my sisters. If that were possible (which it is not), I should like it of all things.

‘If I am appointed I will think no more of the army.’

The following letter is the joint production of Mountstuart and his eldest brother. The handwriting changes after the word ‘*Britannica* :’—

‘Little Ryder Street, June 10.

‘My dear Mother,—I have received the plan of Cumbernauld House, and like it very well. Captain Robinson has put

up beds for John Adam and I, so we will not be obliged to sleep in cots. My most considerable books are the "Novelist's Magazine," 25 large volumes containing two or three novels each, and the "British Classics," same size, five vols., containing such things as the *Spectator*, *Guardian*, *Rambler*, and "Mundell's Poets," containing every good British poet, and the "Encyclopædia Britannica." . . . I cannot get this beast to write better, nor to say anything but about his beastly books. There is a report in town that the French have got all by the ears, and that the Jacobins have the upper hand, and have sent four ships of the line to join Admiral Hotham at Gib.

'The mapp¹ of this fellow's countenance is doing for you.

'Your affectionate sons,

'JOHN AND MOUNT.'

His brother accompanied him to Portsmouth to join the fleet, which was detained by contrary winds. After a short stay at 'this noble blackguard town,' as the young writer describes it, he embarked on board the 'Berrington,' one of the ships of the East India fleet, in company with his cousin John Adam, and Robert Houston, who shared the same cabin. If he felt his separation from his family when at school, he felt it doubly now. He suffered through life from sea-sickness, and now, after a month of suffering, his spirits were at the lowest ebb.

' "Berrington," latitude 4 N., August 14, 1795.

'My dear Mother,—I write this by "Belvidere," which goes to St. Helena and China, and will leave this at St. Helena, where some home-bound ship will get it. She leaves us to-morrow. I wrote a letter by the "Excellent," but the boat sailed before my letter was finished. You will be a little surprised to hear that I have not got over my sea-sickness yet, neither has Judge Watson's son. Adam and Houston have not been sick at all. There is on board this ship a carpenter who went out with Bishop. I will write the characters of the

¹ The *mapp* is a pencil drawing from which the lithograph was taken which forms the frontispiece of this volume.

passengers from Calcutta, but I cannot help saying something of the captain, whose manners have made him disliked by every one of his passengers. He seems to have the most thorough contempt for them all, us poor dogs in particular. I enclose a letter to Mr. Stark. I hope, my dear mother, the first news I hear of him will be this: Yesterday Mr. Stark was presented to the Kirk of ——. I am sure that would give me great pleasure. Excuse the shortness and bad writing, for, besides sickness, whenever the ship moves, our

“Paper, pens and ink, and we
Roll up and down our ships at sea,
Fa la, la, la, la, la,”

as the song says. I cannot express my dislike to the voyage.

‘Give my love to my sisters and Curly. Oh! how happy I would be to be even at Kensington, in the same island with you, and where I had letters every four days, while here I cannot hear oftener than ~~once~~ in the six months!’

‘I am, dear mother, your affectionate son,

‘M. ELPHINSTONE.

‘I will be much obliged to you if you send me the magazines and any periodical paper that is coming out.’

After a voyage of more than eight months, in the course of which they were detained for six weeks at Rio Janeiro, and nearly as long at Madras, they reached Calcutta on February 26, 1796. From Madras he writes in a more cheerful tone. The party were hospitably entertained by Lord Hobart, the Governor. ‘We ride every morning,’ he says, ‘with the Lord (as he is called here), about ten miles at full gallop. Sir F. Hamilton and we are the only guests here. I like Madras extremely, but I still wish heartily I had been enabled by fortune to live in my own country with you and my brothers and sisters. However, I find India much more pleasant than I expected.

‘I am, my dear mother,

‘Your affectionate son,

‘M. ELPHINSTONE.’

Mountstuart's brother James had preceded him to India in the Civil Service of the Company two years before, and was now stationed at Benares. He came down to Calcutta to welcome the new arrival, and in a letter to his mother in April 1796 he gives the following glowing picture of the young writer. The remark as to the sweetness of his disposition, though written with the partial feeling of an affectionate brother, is confirmed by his contemporaries, and should be kept in mind when we meet in the journals from which I have to quote the self-reproaches on account of the infirmity of his temper with which they abound:—

‘Calcutta, April 22, 1796.

‘My dearest mother will, before this reaches her, have heard of the safe arrival of Mountstuart in Bengal. I came here a few days ago and found him in perfect health, and I really think by far the finest young man I ever saw. He is still the same affectionate, good-hearted creature as when I left him; but so much improved that I did not know him. He has one of the sweetest tempers I ever knew, and is a very great favourite with everybody who knows him. I am delighted to think that we are to be together, as Sir John Shore was so good as to appoint him to Benares, where I am. I am so much taken up about him, and so proud of him that I really cannot write, and I am sure that this epistle will be full of nonsense. From the manner in which my sisters wrote of Mount I had formed quite a different idea of him, till I was most agreeably surprised to find him what he is. I think I see you, my much-loved mother, when you receive this; what unspeakable happiness will it be to you to hear that he is safe arrived in perfect health, and much pleased with his situation! . . .

‘Adieu, my ever-dear mother. I need only add that we are in perfect health, and I remain ever your most affectionate and dutiful son,

‘JAMES RUTHVEN ELPHINSTONE.’

Mountstuart's letter of the same date as the above gives a particular description of his elder brother, and then proceeds to make a demand for home news:—

‘Where is John now? Is he still with the Duke of York? When did you hear from or of Charles? Where is he now? What ship does he command? Are all my sisters well? I shall write them by these ships. Write me, my dear mother, particularly about everybody and everything at Cumbernauld. What a time it will be before I am there again! How does Curly come on with his learning? Give my love to him. Has Mr. Stark got any of my letters? Has he got a kirk yet? Is Wully Stuart alive yet? How are Hector, Tearhim, and Tom? Has Robert made any more of his walk when he was at Cumbernauld? This long string of questions in this confused way will give you trouble to answer, but I believe I could ask a hundred more. I have everything to ask and nothing to tell; for in Scotland everything interests me, and in this country what is there (except James and J. Adam) that you could wish to hear about? I write Uncle William by these ships. Uncle Keith has been excessively kind to all three in recommending us strongly to Sir J. Shore and Sir R. Abercrombie, both of whom have been very attentive, particularly the last. We set out by water to our stations in a week. May every happiness attend you and all my sisters and brothers!’

Very few of the letters addressed to his family during the four years of his residence at Benares are extant. Those which survive refer chiefly to matters of home and family interest. They are cheerful in tone, and betray no restless repining, so common among young public servants during the first years of banishment. They give a short account of his manner of life, the kindness he experienced from friends of his family in Calcutta, and his two months’ voyage on the river to Benares. The characters of the leading members of the society in Benares are lightly sketched. He was fortunate in one respect. Mr. Davis, the magistrate of Benares, under whom he was placed, was an able public servant, and a man of letters. He was one of the pioneers in the study of Sanscrit literature, and the first to lay before the world an accurate account of the astronomy of the Hindus. Mr. Elphinstone in his letters

speaks of him in terms of regard. It is curious that his brother James was also under another eminent Sanscrit scholar. 'I went to Mirzapore,' Mountstuart writes, 'about three months ago, and I intend repeating the visit in a day or two. His judge (Mr. Colebrooke) is a very good man, and has a very good opinion of him. I am, as I wrote before, under a Mr. Davis, whom I liked well at first, and who improves on acquaintance.'

No literary tests awaited the young civil servant at this period. He was placed at once in harness, and if he showed an aptitude for business, he was soon placed in a responsible position, and his future career was assured. And yet the situation was full of danger. The public service was in a transition state. A generation had hardly passed since the newly formed empire was brought to the verge of ruin by the rapacity of its governors, and the standard of morality, public and private, was low. The provinces were plundered by a succession of young men freed from restraint at an early age, and protected by the conditions of the service from dismissal, and encouraged to look to private trade as the source of emolument. The laxity which distinguished the old *régime* had been partially eradicated under the administration of Lord Cornwallis, whose measures, supported by his character, raised the tone of the service to the high standard which it has ever since maintained. Much, however, remained to be done. A few years later Lord Wellesley founded the College of Fort William, to give some chance of culture to the raw youths who filled the lower branches of the establishment. The minute of the Governor-General recommending the establishment to the Home Government states that writers were usually sent out between sixteen and eighteen years of age, that their education was imperfect, and in many cases limited to commercial training, as if they were intended for this branch of the service only, or that their relations were in a hurry to get rid of them. These charges were certainly well founded, and although the new institution was not long kept up on its original scale, the necessity of maintaining some standard of qualification and of subjecting

young writers to a special training was at once recognised at home. This generous endeavour to secure to the service a high standard of culture has only been secured in recent times. When Mr. Elphinstone arrived the service was crowded with what were not inaptly called the bad bargains of the Company, and the temptations which beset the young writers on their arrival remained unchecked.

There were, however, advantages in the system under which they were set to work at an age when many young men of the present generation are still at school, which in some measure counterbalanced its dangers. Those who are placed early in situations of responsibility, and rise superior to the temptations by which they are beset, acquire a force of character which no scheme of training can create. The circumstances in which Mr. Elphinstone was placed were favourable to this early development, and I attribute to this some of the precocity he was soon to display.

There are occasional allusions in his journals and correspondence to this period of his career. The usual commencement of the career of a young writer was to run in debt, and Mr. Elphinstone, who was through life careless of money, did not escape from the contagious example, and his debts proved an embarrassment for many years. It is pleasing to have to add that he now entered on a course of systematic reading, which he followed up through life. He attacked Greek in earnest. His stock when he arrived in India must have been small. He could have mastered very little at the High School in Edinburgh, and it is not probable that this stock was much improved at Kensington. His general reading was very miscellaneous, and will be noted further on. He was at all times fond of seclusion, either absolute or with some congenial companion, when he applied to any study or serious work. I find an allusion to this trait in one of his later journals, where he speaks of his classical reading in a cave at Mirzapore.

Any love of study that he acquired at this time must have been in spite of the temptations by which he was surrounded. The tastes of European residents in India were then

coarse, as might be expected in a society that wanted the civilising influence of educated women. The drinking bouts were excessive, though, perhaps, not more prolonged than he may have witnessed in Scotland before he left, and gambling was very prevalent. To the latter of these vices Mountstuart evinced an instinctive dislike. In one of his early letters he sketches the character of some of the leading members of their small society, and two of the number are stigmatised as gamblers. In referring to the death of a friend, for whom he entertained a great regard, he says, 'He was a very fine fellow indeed, and neither a gambler nor anything of the sort,' as if this were the special vice of the day.²

The monotony of his residence at Benares was broken in 1796 by the sudden arrival of the Governor-General, owing to the threatening state of affairs in the North-West. Benares was then a frontier station, and the society is described in Mountstuart's letter as thrown into great alarm owing to the impending invasion of Hindustan by Zemaun Shah, the Affghan ruler. He had succeeded to the throne in 1793, and passed the greater part of his short reign in planning invasions of India, from which he was as constantly recalled by disorders at home. The Mogul Emperor of Delhi was held in subjection by the Mahrattas. They had been driven from that city about thirty years previously by Ahmed Shah, the Affghan prince, who, at the battle of Paniput, crushed for a time the rising power of the Mahrattas; but in the confused times which followed this struggle the latter had recovered their influence in the north of India. Religious feeling, as much as policy, impelled the Affghan rulers to attempt to restore the Mohammedan dominion. But success at Delhi meant war with the English, and Zemaun Shah's invasions were aimed as much against the rising European power as against the Mahrattas. The neigh-

² I had occasion to remark on the extent to which these vices prevailed in the society of Bengal in the published life of Mr. H. T. Colebrooke. His letters, and those of his brother, written only a few years previous to the date of Mr. Elphinstone's arrival, contain frequent allusions to the prevalence of both vices, and I have been told by one of my father's contemporaries that there was much indulgence in play at Mirzapore.

bouring province of Allahabad had been wrested from the Moguls by Hastings a few years previous, and was handed over to the Nawab Vizier of Oude, with whom we were in close alliance. The object of the visit of the Governor-General was to arrange with the Vizier for their common defence. Mr. Elphinstone, in a letter to his uncle, Lord Keith, thus describes the situation. The slight assistance which he was called upon to give to Sir John Shore on this occasion may be noted as his first introduction to diplomatic life.

‘ Sir R. Abercrombie (who was very kind to James, J. Adam and me) sailed on the “Berrington.” It was thought that he chose a bad time to relinquish his command, when the country was threatened with an invasion from Zemaun Shah, King of Cabul, who, having settled the rebellion (by which he was last year obliged to put off his enterprise) and provided against such disturbance in future, has crossed the Indus with a large army, consisting entirely of horse, invaded the Sikhs, and taken Lahore. He declares his intention of conquering Hindustan, and of reinstating the Mogul in his former power. In consequence of this our army has been put on the war establishment, and marched to Canoge, whence Colonel Palmer has been despatched to meet this king and inquire his intentions. Two regiments, under the command of General Popham, have also been sent to take possession of the fort of Allahabad, which is to be made a *depôt* for stores of provisions. But, on General Popham’s arrival at Allahabad, he was refused admittance, and given to understand that it was not the intention of the Nabob Vizier to allow any troops under a British officer to enter the fort. As soon as the news of this reached Calcutta, Sir J. Shore set off to Lucknow, and has got as far as this on his way. It is six days since he left Calcutta, from which place we are upwards of five hundred miles. I went yesterday to wait on him, and he made me assist him in copying some public letters to the Resident at Lucknow, directing him, among other things, to cease pressing the Nabob on the subject of Allahabad for the present. Sir J. Shore leaves this to-day. I suppose this

invasion is not much to be dreaded, and that the members of Government are not so much afraid of it as they pretend to be, for the purpose of getting something out of the Vizier. I dare say Zemaun Shah will very soon march back to his own country without any further disturbance.'

Mr. Elphinstone's residence at Benares was not to close without an eventful incident. Sir John Shore had set aside the claims of Vizier Aly to the throne of Oude, and the deposed Prince, who was held in surveillance at Benares, visited the Resident, Mr. Cherry, followed by his armed retainers, and, whether under a preconceived plan, or whether under the impulse of passion, he aimed a blow at him with his sword, which was accepted by his followers as a signal for the murder of all the British officers present at the interview, and the attempted massacre of every European resident at Benares. The work of death was checked by the gallant resistance of Mr. Elphinstone's friend, Mr. Davis, who, with spear in hand, defended the winding stairs that led to the roof of his house, on which he had gathered his family, and he maintained his post until the arrival of the troops put an end to the disturbance.

There is a gap in the correspondence at this period, and the subject is only shortly alluded to in a letter to his mother of a later date. He writes: 'Bob Houston, of Jordanhill, was up here from last December till May. He was in my house during the massacre which happened last January. We were together all day. In that unfortunate business we lost, among others, a son of Graham, of Fintray. He was a most excellent young man, and universally beloved. His death must have been a heavy blow to his family.' The two friends had a very narrow escape. Sir Robert Houston, in the letter from which I have already quoted, thus describes it:—'I happened to be on a visit to your uncle at the time; but we knew nothing of the murders around us until all the other Europeans had been destroyed or had fled; when we mounted our horses, pursued by a body of the enemy, whose pursuit was eluded by riding through a high sugar-cane plantation, when they lost sight of us.'

CHAPTER II.

FIRST START IN DIPLOMACY, 1801-1802.

APPOINTED TO POONA—THE JOURNEY—TRAVELLING IN STATE—MEDITATIONS—SERINGAPATAM AND COLONEL WELLESLEY—HYDERABAD AND POLITICS—RISE OF THE MAHRATTA POWER—POONA POLITICS—EXTRACTS FROM JOURNAL.

THE file of letters from which I have quoted in the preceding chapter came to a close in August 1799. Lady Elphinstone died two years later; but none of her son's letters are to be found of a later date than those last quoted; nor indeed do I find in the collection of papers entrusted to me any correspondence with other members of the Elphinstone family till many years afterwards. Their place is supplied by the journals, which commence in 1801, and by a series of letters addressed to his friend Edward Strachey, of the Civil Service of Bengal,¹ which,

¹ Mr Edward Strachey, Mr. Elphinstone's friend and correspondent, was one of a family who have for three generations rendered distinguished service in India. Sir Henry Strachey, the first baronet, accompanied Lord Clive to India as his private secretary, to which office he was recommended by George Grenville. He afterwards held the office of Under Secretary of State. Three of his sons went to India in the civil service of the Company; Edward, the second son, who was two years older than Mountstuart, after being for some time in the diplomatic line, exchanged to the judicial branch of the service, and remained in that department till he left India in 1811. In 1819 he was appointed to a situation in the Examiner's office in the India Office at the same time with James Mill, and held his appointment till his death in 1831. In 1813 he published a translation from the Persian version of the *Vîja Ganîta*, a Sanscrit treatise on Algebra, written by an author who wrote in the twelfth century of our era. The work is occasionally alluded to in Mr. E.'s letters, and he appears to have been engaged on it so far back as 1803. Several of Mr. E. Strachey's sons were also in the Indian service, both civil and military, and have attained high rank in recent times.

P.S.—Since these pages were in type a memorandum has been shown to me dictated by Mr. Elphinstone in 1843 to Sir Edward Strachey, the son of his old friend, which clears up some matters that I have treated as obscure. It

however, do not commence till after the commencement of the war in 1803.

The history of his transfer to the diplomatic service may be inferred from the narrative in the journal from which I am about to quote. In 1801 he proceeded to Calcutta, with a view to attend the newly founded College at Fort William. This must have been a voluntary act on his part, and not required by any rules of the service, as he had been already five years in India. It has been mentioned that he took to study at Benares, and was now glad to take advantage of the opportunities of improvement placed within his reach. His transfer to the diplomatic line followed immediately afterwards. I have before me a letter dated January 1798, from Harry Dundas (afterwards Lord Melville), in reply to a request addressed to him by Lady Elphinstone, to use his influence with Lord Mornington in favour of her son. It is couched in very formal terms, informing Lady Elphinstone that he never interfered in such matters, but would make known to the Governor-General the friendly interest he took in the young writer. The promised letter may have had a tardy influence in directing Lord Mornington's attention to the abilities shown by Mountstuart; but young men have at all times worked their way in India to the front by sterling merit, and we need not attribute to interest the promotion that was now presented to him. It was the policy of Lord Wellesley to select and appropriate to this branch of the service the most promising of the young civil servants. A knot of them, including Mr. Elphinstone's cousin, John Adam, served under the eye of their chief in the Governor-General's office, as it was called, and rose

appears that Mr. Elphinstone, when at Benares, was assistant to his friend, who held the office of registrar under Davis. He came to Calcutta in 1800 to attend the college, and lived with Mr. Strachey. Colonel Kirkpatrick was at this time appointed to take charge of our relations with the Peshwa; Mr. Strachey was nominated secretary to the Resident, and Mr. Elphinstone again became the assistant of his friend. Colonel Kirkpatrick was taken ill and went to sea, and the two friends were allowed to wander about in the manner described in the journal awaiting the arrival of their chief in Poona. Colonel Close was eventually appointed to this Court, and the travellers joined him there,

rapidly to distinction in the stirring times which succeeded. Elphinstone was not one of their number, and as interest had nothing to do with the rise of his contemporaries, it had certainly nothing to do with Mountstuart's subsequent advancement. Here is his own story. The volume from which these extracts are given begins abruptly, the first pages being torn out.² It may be mentioned in passing that to many of the volumes of journals a quotation from some favourite poet is prefixed by way of motto. Some lines from Hafiz appear on the boards of this volume. I give the translation:—

‘O Hafiz, do not allow your life to be passed in vain,
Strive and obtain some result from your life.’

‘*Jan. 14.*—Received a letter from Mr. Commelin informing me that I might attend the College, and desiring me to put myself under the Provost's orders. Adam came; talked with him; dined.

‘*Jan. 15.*—Did not ride; sat at home; waited on Parson Brown at his chambers. He was sitting with Mr. Scott Waring. I was embarrassed when I went in, most unaccountably, for I felt no great veneration for the company. The Provost lamented that he could not yet give me apartments; but told me that I might attend hall. He asked me if I had begun Persian, Bengali. I said that I had begun Persian, but that I had never attended to the Hindustani. He then gave me Gilchrist's “*Antijargonist*.”³ He showed me a letter from Government to him, telling him that the two Laings, Ross Waring,

² I infer from subsequent entries that the practice of keeping a journal was commenced at Benares, but any volumes of an older date than the one before me must have perished in the destruction of the Residency at Poona on the breach with the Peshwa in 1817.

³ The *Antijargonist* was one of the early attempts to convey to a student of Hindustani the rudiments of the tongue. It consists of a very short grammar, dialogues, vocabularies, and some selections, all in roman characters. This dialect was popularly known as ‘*Moors*,’ and is so described occasionally in Mr. Elphinstone's letters and journal—that is, the language of ‘*the Moors*,’ as the Mussulmans were called at the time. The Indian appellation of the polished language to which Gilchrist gave the name of Hindustani is *Urdu*, or language of the *horde*, that is, of the camp or court.

J. Guthrie, and I had leave to attend the College. We called on Adam at his office. Went to shops; bought Rousseau's works, all but one volume of "Eloise," French, in 33 vols., and the "Compère Mathieu."

'Came home and read the "Antijargonist;" marked the beauties. I did not read the grammar, nor look at the vocabulary. Evening, athletic exercise; dined at Strachey's. Arabic. Hafiz, Odes 84, 85.'

'*Jan. 23.*—Strachey called. He has had a new offer about Poona. I am to have 800 rupees a month. I am for going, because we shall see new people and new manners. We walked towards Edmonstone's office. S. says that he is unwilling to break the quiet into which he has settled, and he is afraid that he shall have less leisure at Poona than here. He was unwilling to answer so soon, and talked of seeing Kirkpatrick.⁴ I said he would do well to call on him and ask him whether the business of the agency would take up much of his time, and if he should say that it would employ the assistant constantly, the offer ought to be rejected. S. said he should like to bargain that if he disliked the place he might return without its being taken amiss. I said that, as the reason for sending us was that young civil servants might be fitted for the diplomatic line, it could not be expected that we should be allowed to leave that line without some good reason; that even should Lord W. promise not to take our return amiss, his promise could not prevent his being displeased at the failure of his plan for educating young civilians.'

They left the office with the resolve to consult their friends, and Elphinstone, on his way home, fell in with his friend Davis, to whom the knotty point was referred, and was advised by him in terms which fell in with the aims and aspira-

⁴ Colonel William Kirkpatrick, here referred to, first distinguished himself in a mission to Nepaul during Lord Cornwallis's administration, and afterwards published an account of the country. He became military secretary to Lord Wellesley, and was a member of the commission for partitioning the dominions of Tippoo Sultan. He should be distinguished from Major Kirkpatrick, Resident at Hyderabad, whose name also appears in the account of Mr. Elphinstone's travels in the Deccan

tions of the moment. At the foot of this page of the journals written many years afterwards, there is the following entry: 'Davis gave me his advice in a quotation which rang in my ear for the best part of my life :—

“What pleasure find we in this life to lock it
From action and adventure ? ”’

These latter words, which are quoted from ‘Cymbeline,’⁵ recur again and again in both letters and journals.

The interview with Mr. Edmonstone took place on January 23, and on March 6 he started on his long journey to Poona, accompanied by his friend E. Strachey and a young officer of the name of Hamilton, bound for Hyderabad. It would appear that Colonel Kirkpatrick was to have been one of the party, for the young diplomatist, in an interview with Mr. Edmonstone, inquires whether they might travel separately from Colonel K.’s tents, and whether they should have a guard. Both questions are answered in the negative. Colonel Kirkpatrick’s name does not appear in the journal till they approach Madras, when Strachey receives a letter from him informing them that they have leave to go thither. Whether they travelled together any part of the way, or whether he proceeded by sea, the elephants, &c., must have belonged to the Colonel. Two young civilians travelling to join their stations could not have afforded such a retinue. No reason is given for the choice of the route, which lay through the province of Cuttack, then forming part of the dominions of the Raja of Berar, and through the Northern Circars, a group of semi-independent chiefs, also foreign territory. On reaching the Godavery, after a six weeks’ march, the paths of the travellers diverged. Mr. Elphinstone and his friend proceeded by dawk for Madras, a distance of about 300 miles, and after a stay of some weeks they struck westward for Seringapatam, where they were hospitably received by Colonel Wellesley. Their next course was due north for Hyderabad, upwards of three hundred miles, and thence to Poona; the whole of this zigzag journey extending over upwards of 800 miles.

⁵ Act iv. sc. 4.

The entries in the journal consist chiefly of notes of everyday occurrences, diversified by very few incidents of interest. A few extracts will be sufficient to illustrate the state of the country, and the life and pursuits of the writer.

They started from Calcutta for Midnapore by dawk, and then commenced the march. After two days they entered the Mahratta territory, and at once noted the change in the demeanour of the people. They were not rude, he says, but showed them no respect, and refused to go to look for their tents. The guards of the small forts they passed were equally uncereemonious. On arriving at their encampment, the natives thronged round to see the strangers go through their exercises, which consisted in throwing the spear, the sword exercise, and firing at a mark with pistols. They marched through these provinces in military array.

‘*April 1.*—Slept till midnight. Rose and made the people prepare to march. We had been told by the havildar a story of some people having threatened to make us pay duty,⁶ and in consequence we determined to march all our people in one body, be ourselves at the head, and to have the sepoy in the rear. This is to continue till we get through the Circars, in which there are disturbances.

‘*April 2.*—We got off at one; I and Strachey as usual in palankeens, Hamilton on horseback. I slept till daybreak, when Strachey called me. We were near the *Chóci*, and had halted to get our people together. After some delay we marched in close order over a bridge and passed the *Chóci*. The commander told us that if we had any *Jatris* (pilgrims) with us he would stop them. Our people made a formidable appearance. We had eight elephants, eleven camels, four horses, ten bullocks of our own, beside tattoes (ponies), and bullocks belonging to our servants. We had twenty sepoy, and from 150 to 200 servants and coolies. We encamped in a young mango tope, where we had chosen a place for our tents. We went on an elephant to the sea, which is a mile and a half from our encampment. We were much delighted with the sight.

⁶ The toll levied on the pilgrims to Pooree (Juggernaut).

One elephant was afraid, and stopped. We walked on to the beach. It was cold and pleasant. After staying some time we returned. On the beach, at the distance of about two miles on each side of us, was a place that looked like a fort. On our way back we had a good view of the pagoda. I was disappointed in it, having expected something stupendous.'

Several pages of the journal are occupied with an account of the temple of Juggernaut and its surroundings. During their wanderings they encounter a fakeer, who prophesies the advent of British rule.

'Near the sea are some little pagodas and a sort of fort, almost sunk in the ground. Beneath it is a little temple, where there is a fakeer. He spoke to us without any respect, and told us to go on to the sea and worship. Afterwards he came to the edge of his ground, and called us to him, but would not let us pass his boundary. When we were near he said, "*Súnó* (listen), when will you take this country? This country needs you (or wants you, *tumko chahe*); the Hindoos here are villains, but you are true men (*saché*). When will you take this country?" We answered "Never!" He said "Yes; you will certainly take it." We returned as we came.'

From Pooree their march led them to the Chilka lake. Here is the record of a day:—

'*April 6.*—Rose at daybreak and crossed the Chilka lake in a canoe. We were both pleased with the view of the side we had left. The two spires and other buildings of the Durgah among the trees, and the old temple which we visited yesterday, were most conspicuous on the shore behind them. The water was smooth, and the sky diversified by clouds. We landed near the Choultry, and mounted our horses. My sice had forgot to get a saddle or bridle, so I was forced to get a folded blanket, with a⁷ bit. We rode along a very narrow isthmus between the Chilka and the sea. We drove a herd of antelopes before us for a mile or two. After we had galloped on the beach for three-quarters of an hour we rode to the sands. We got to the Company's godown at Mito Alam at

⁷ Illegible in the original.

about eight. Breakfasted at nine. I walked to the sea and along the shore. When I came back I was bilious and ill; at eleven I found myself still unwell, so I lay down and slept till half-past twelve. I read some of the ninth book of Virgil—the battle on the Trojan wall—and I then sat with Hamilton for some time, and talked about the life of a subaltern. Then I walked with him and Strachey to the seaside. They left me then, and went to bathe in the lake. I walked for a long time, and looked at the sea. I thought of the descriptions and figures taken from it in Homer and Virgil. I was sorry when I thought how little I read such authors. My debts and my duty compel me to learn Persian and Hindi. I then thought how little I was exerting myself to acquire them, how little I thought at all now. I thought on the consequences of my never reflecting, my high opinion of myself, which is sure to increase in proportion to my idleness and thoughtlessness. I remembered the many fruitless resolutions which I had made to subdue this arrogance. I saw the effects of it on my behaviour. I despise what I do not say myself, oppose plans which are or ought to be indifferent to me; I am fastidious and arrogant. I am not always this, but often. I returned towards the tents. The lake and the opposite shore, fringed with trees and the hills, were beautiful. The people were trying to surround and kill deer. The bearers did kill one with sticks this morning. Deer, antelopes, jackals, and tame buffaloes are the only animals to be seen on the sands. After I reached the tent it rained for a few minutes. Dressed, read “*Hero and Leander*,” walked on the shore, dined, and went to bed at ten.’

On the following day they proceeded on their journey, passing along the sea-shore, and riding after the deer, which were in great number, and admiring the scenery at the head of the Chilka.

‘At Malaud we found a Mahratta condottier with thirty or forty men. He had been hired by Mr. Brown for our protection. He brought a very polite letter from Mr. Brown, informing us that his province was in complete distraction, and that he had

merely troops enough to enable him to keep possession of the open country. Breakfasted. Went to Strachey's tent. He had been conversing with the Mahratta, who told him that Mr. Brown was at a place within two miles of Ganjam, that the refractory zemindars plundered the open country, and that from Brown's camp villages were to be seen burning on all sides. We talked over our plans for marching, and determined that we three were to ride in front with pistols. We were to be accompanied by five of Gopi Nath's (the Mahratta) men. After us were to come the bangies, the beds, and the unarmed attendants. Then were to come the elephants and camels and bullocks. The sepoy, in a body, were to bring up the rear. Our left flank was to be covered by the sea, and our right by Gopi Nath's men. Then the clashies and other armed followers.'

The disturbed district was passed without any incident, and during the rest of the journey to Madras there was very little to record, beyond the usual routine of the daily march and the different stages of their journey by dawk.

Throughout this journal there are scattered notes of reading, chiefly poetry. He was devoted to Hafiz, Saadi, and Horace, turning occasionally to Anacreon. The two friends frequently read together, and the odes and other passages of the authors which engaged them are duly noted from time to time, but there are very few remarks or criticisms, as in the later journals.

Upon entering the territory of Madras there was apparently some change of plans, which remains unexplained. Their tents and servants were left behind, and they proceeded by dawk to the Presidency. At this part of the journey they encountered a new obstacle, owing to the commercial jealousy of the East India Company towards interlopers. One night, while proceeding to Masulipatam, their palankeens were stopped by a Captain Hunt, who demanded their passports. They had not provided themselves with these credentials, but Strachey succeeded in satisfying the authority that they were true men by producing some letters addressed to himself, and they were allowed to proceed.

They whiled away their time at Madras, and were hospitably entertained by the Governor. On their departure they were supplied with maps and instructions as to their route by Colonel Wilks, who advised the travellers to visit a certain temple, where they would meet an old Mahratta woman who remembered Sivajee, an extraordinary case of longevity, considering that the Mahratta conqueror died upwards of one hundred and twenty years before!

At length Elphinstone started alone for Bangalore, and after a month's stay at this military station, in the course of which he made excursions to Nundydroog, Seringapatam, and the falls of the Caveri, he was joined by Strachey, and they travelled in their palankeens, halting occasionally at choultries.

During this journey he experienced a severe attack of the liver, an affection from which he suffered through life, and the effect of which was aggravated by the severe mercurial treatment he underwent.

'*July 30.*—I left Strachey in the fort, and returned to the choultry in very low spirits. On the way I made some verses. After some time I came to the choultry. We read several odes of Hafiz; then walked to an idgah⁸ on the hill. Returned and dined. My bowel-complaint has returned; I am afraid it will prevent the cure of my other complaint. How my health and spirits have changed in a short time! When I left Madras I was in the finest health. Now, in addition to the complaints I have mentioned, δύο κῆρε τανηλεγέος θανάτοι⁹, I have another which entirely takes away the comfort they had left me.'

In spite of his depression, he makes many notes on the country they passed. On leaving Madras he had laid down some resolutions what to observe.

'I am now going to travel merely for the sake of seeing the country. I must lay down a plan to enable me to see it with the more advantage. I must resolve to be very active, to prefer travelling and seeing curious places to remaining at stations,

⁸ Idgah, or Bedgah, a place of festival or prayer.

⁹ Two fates of long-sleeping death.

however agreeable they may be. I must not be unwilling to set out on an excursion because I am alone, and I must expose myself to as much fatigue as I can without injuring my health. I must comply with Forbes's wish of hurrying through the Carnatic; but after I get above the Ghauts I will not scruple to turn out of my way whenever there is a place distinguished for its natural beauty, its buildings, or the remarkable actions of which it has been the scene, even if it should be fifty miles out of the regular road. I will try to observe the produce of the country—the sorts of grain, trees, &c., which it produces. I will talk as much as I can with the principal people on the government, the mode of collecting the revenue, and administering justice, the effects of the acts of our government on the natives. I will converse as much as I can on those subjects with the natives, and also on the subject of the productions, and of the history of the country. If I adhere to all these resolutions, and despise trouble and fatigue, I hope to make a very profitable journey.'

These resolutions were not followed up very perseveringly. Here is the first allusion to them:—

'Walked with Strachey before breakfast. We went into the shop, examined the articles, asked questions about their use, the place where produced, &c. I have never done this before. I will begin to do it now, and employ my time in learning something of the country through which I pass, instead of indulging in mere unprofitable thought.'

On entering the territory of Mysore, he makes the following remarks on the state of the country:—'That we have gone through for some days has the appearance of land that has been well cultivated and afterwards abandoned. I suppose it was depopulated under the Mohammedan government. The people of the village say it was a flourishing place under the Raja. How much we have been misinformed about Tippoo's government! He was said to be engaged in improving the country. It appears that if he had lived much longer this country would have been a desert. This is Colonel Close's opinion also. All

the great works, tanks, bridges, &c., were made by the Hindoos.'

They arrived at Seringapatam in July and were hospitably entertained by Colonel Wellesley, then in command of the subsidiary force of Mysore. This first meeting with the great Captain, then unknown to fame, passed without any noteworthy incident. Colonel Wellesley was immersed in business, and after showing his guests to their rooms he retired to his desk. He afterwards took them on a long ride to Harris's encamping ground, and they course, though without sport, on the neighbouring hills, and over ground so stony that they could hardly make a step without a risk of laming their horses. After dinner Colonel Wellesley conversed much about Doondiah, a predatory adventurer whom he had hunted down in the preceeding year,¹ and, as usual, rowed 'Hushmut Jung.' This last name, lit. 'pomp of war,' is given in Arabic characters. It was applied as a nickname to the Resident at Hyderabad, whose name frequently appears in the journal.

From Seringapatam the two friends proceeded by easy stages to Hyderabad, the seat of the Government of the Nizam, the titular viceroy of the Deckan. They were supplied with a route and hircarras by Colonel Wellesley, travelled in their palankins, and arrived at their destination in the middle of August. Their plans seemed as unsettled as ever. Though they remained at Hyderabad for three months, there is no allusion to any official duties. Elphinstone continued his Persian studies, and attacked the Mahratta language systematically, as if in preparation for Poona. But his reading was for the most part desultory. I find the following abrupt entry in the journal:—'I am not to go to Madras;' as if he had some promise of an opening there. His friend, who never took kindly to the diplomatic line, and ultimately exchanged it for the

¹ The campaign against Doondiah was the first occasion on which the Duke of Wellington held an independent command in the field. The conquest of Mys re threw out of employment many of Tippoo's soldiers, and Doondiah gathered round him a considerable force on the confines of Mysore and in the adjoining provinces. Our troops were engaged for nearly three months hunting him down.

judicial branch of the service, was still more unsettled in his views. At one time he sent a letter to Lord Wellesley about proceeding to Persia, and at another he is in correspondence with Mr. Davis about returning to Hindustan.

Here is a curious record of the desultory character of his reading, perhaps not more so than was unavoidable in a wandering life :—

‘*October 6.*—They tell me ’tis my birthday. I am now twenty-two. How pleasantly has the time passed since my last birthday! From the beginning of October to March I lived a studious sort of life, but not the studious sort of life that I lived for the year before at Benares in solitude and depression. During the last four months of 1800 I lived in the house with Adam, and spent most of my evenings with Strachey, and I sometimes broke the monotony of my life by going into company. Since March I have been on a very agreeable journey; the variety of beautiful scenes and the changes from one agreeable society to another left no time for tedium. The interval between my leaving Bangalore and arriving here was the least pleasant part of the year; but among all my ills there were some circumstances which made the recollection, even of that period, pleasant. Since I arrived here, I have been enjoying the return of health and the ease and tranquillity of my situation.

‘With respect to my mind, I have certainly improved in some things since this time last year, in others I have fallen off; on the whole, I think I am a gainer. I have read since last October a good deal of the history relating to the East, a good deal of Timur’s “Institutes,” most part of the Proceedings of the “Secret Committee,” Orme’s “Hindustan” (a second time), and Strachey’s “Narrative,” “History of Persia,” Sale’s “Preliminary Discourse to the Koran,” Jones’s “Commentarii,” Revisky on Hafiz, some of Gilchrist’s “Grammar.” I translated with Strachey a considerable part of an Arabic Grammar, and read Saadi’s “Gulistan” to the thirty-eighth page in Harrington’s edition (*i.e.* about three-quarters of book i.), and a great deal more of his “Bostan.” Of Hafiz, I read 143 odes in succession, and about as many more here and there.

Many of them I read many times. I read some of the "Masnavi of Gelaludin;" not much of books not connected with India. I read a good deal of the "Port Royal" Greek Grammar, an "Odyssey" or two, a few chapters of Herodotus, as much of Hesiod as is in the "Eton Selecta;" the 1st, 7th, and 8th Idylls of Theocritus, and his "Epithalamium of Helen;" all of Sappho, Theognis, Callistratus, Bion, Moschus, and Musæus, as are in that collection—(they are most of them scraps); the Georgics, all Phædrus, all Horace once over, and many parts repeatedly, and a good deal of Petronius. I looked into the Italian Grammar; read the preface and seventy or eighty pages of Tasso, one book of Machiavelli's History, a novel and play of his. I also read all Bacon's essays, Hume's "Dialogue on Natural Religion," Berkeley's essay on the "Principles of Human Knowledge," Middleton's "Free Enquiry," his letter from Rome, several dissertations of his in Latin and English, some (1 vol. and a half) of his "Cicero," a good deal of Condorcet on the Human Understanding, Tracts by Warburton and a Warburtonian; Warburton on the 6th book, from "Warton's Virgil," some essays of Heyne at the end of the 6th vol., Denina's "Revolutions of Literature," Johnson's "Lives" (I had read them before), Boswell's "Life of Johnson," Voltaire's "Louis XIV." in English, Aitkin's "Essay on the Use of Natural History." In poetry, "Paradise Lost" and "Regained," all Waller again and again, most of Cowley, Butler, and Denham, Pope and Dryden often, the "Baviad" and "Mæviad," Darwin's "Botanic Garden," Caractacus, many of Milton's Latin poems, a great deal of Fontaine; "The Robbers," and two other plays of Schiller; some Idylls of Gesner, all Boileau's "Satires" and a good number of his "Epistles," and Mithridate. I forgot to mention a great deal of Horace Walpole; Jefferson on "Virginia," Ramsay's "Revolution of South Carolina," the preface to "Bellendenus," Japher's "Farriery," the . . .², "an abstract of St. Pierre's "Etudes de la Nature," a life of Major Geshpill, the "Nation," and novels innumerable.'

At Hyderabad he for the first time enters on the politics of

² Illegible.

the day ; much of the conversation at the Residency turning on the recent events which led to the exclusion of the French from this Court. The Nizam, under previous treaties with the British Government, had subsidised two battalions, but he had in addition organised an army of 15,000 men, under the command of French officers, at the head of whom was M. Raymond, who died shortly before the date of the treaty, when the command fell into the hands of Perron, a very inferior man. In the account which was given to Mr. Elphinstone by Captain Hemming, assistant to the Resident, great and just credit is given to Major Kirkpatrick for the decisive steps taken to carry out the treaty.

‘Drove out with Captain Hemming ; talked about the first subsidiary treaty. Lord Wellesley determined not to go too near with Tippoo unless he got a temporary force established with the Nizam. He expected nothing more. Major Kirkpatrick took upon himself to propose a permanent force, and to raise the terms respecting their pay. He was enabled to carry his point by the attachment of the Minister, Azim ul Omra, to the British connection, by his own personal influence, by the Nizam’s recollection of Raymond’s insolence, and by Perron’s supineness. He had to contend with a party in the Court against the Minister, and with the Minister’s fears that we should not be able to beat the French force.’

Great credit is due to Lord Wellesley for the decisive steps by which our influence was established at this Court. After the death of Raymond there was much dissension among the officers about the succession to the command, and the occasion was promptly seized to negotiate with the Nizam for subsidising a British force. A small force of no more than four battalions now moved swiftly on Hyderabad, and the action of the Government being supported by that of the Resident at the wavering Court, this formidable army was dissolved without a blow.

Our success at Hyderabad, followed as it was by the conquest of Mysore, completely established our ascendancy in the Deckan, and attention was now concentrated on the affairs of the Mahrattas, and the Court of Poona became the scene of a new

struggle. I subjoin Mr. Elphinstone's first impression of the state of things at the Mahratta Court, as derived from his conversation with his friends at Hyderabad: 'Major Hemming said the Mahrattas were too wise to be tempted to admit a subsidiary force of ours. He mentioned that the Peshwa was going to raise several battalions, to be commanded by Brahmins. It appears to me that the Peshwa must feel his subjection to Sindia, that he must be convinced that Sindia's strength arises from his disciplined troops, that as soon as he is convinced that none but Europeans can form corps capable of opposing other Europeans, he will see the advantage of having Englishmen to oppose Sindia's Frenchmen. Sindia is not at present in a condition to resist any attempt of ours to establish troops at Poona. I hope he may not be so weak as to free the Peshwa from apprehension.'

The Resident at the Court, Major Kirkpatrick, was a semi-Indianised Englishman who had married the daughter of the Nizam's Persian Prime Minister, and led a half-Oriental life. His ground was laid out, according to the description in the journal, partly in the taste of Islington, and partly in that of Hindustan. On their approach to the station the travellers sent a message to announce their arrival, and the Resident sent his chobdar to ask after their health, and inquire whether they had breakfasted. Here is the description of the Resident after their first interview :—

'Major Kirkpatrick is a good-looking man; seems about thirty, is really about thirty-five. He wears mustachios; his hair is cropped very short, and his fingers are dyed with henna. In other respects he is like an Englishman. He is very communicative, and very desirous to please; but he tells long stories about himself, and practises all the affectations of which the face and eyes are capable. He offered me a horse, which I declined. He said the horse should attend me, and that I might do as I pleased.' The Resident's conversation appears to have been as eccentric as his manners. He tells a strange story how his hookah-buridar, after cheating and robbing him, proceeded to England and set up as the Prince of Sylhet, took

in everybody, was waited upon by Pitt, dined with the Duke of York, and was presented to the King. On the following day at dinner Major Kirkpatrick talked rather wildly about the secrets of the Government being known in the Court before they were communicated officially to the Resident during the recent negotiations for a subsidiary treaty, and he concluded with talking 'with much pomp about the sources of springs, and with execrable taste about Homer.'

The reigning Prince was an old man, broken in health, and quite unequal to cope with the troubled times in which he was thrown. His death occurred two years later. I insert a description of the presentation at the Court of this infirm ruler:—

'*September 14.*—Went to the Durbar. Major Kirkpatrick goes in great state. He has several elephants, and a state palankeen, led horses, flags, long poles with tassels, &c., and is attended by two companies of infantry and a troop of cavalry. The town through which we passed is in general mean; we had a fine view of the Char Minar through a large arch in front of it. We passed through several courts in going to his Highness's presence. The gates were surrounded by armed men, some of them with beards, one or two with steel caps and gauntlets, some of them very picturesque. At the last entrance the Minister, Azim al Omra, met us, and embraced us. He led us through a court to a Dewan Khaneh, where the Nizam was sitting. I went up to him and presented my nuzzur. Major Kirkpatrick's moonshee showed me how to hold it, and a man behind pressed me down to the proper stoop. His Highness took my nuzzur smiling. I retired and made a low salaam. I was then instantly led to a little adjoining room, which a favourite old female servant showed us. It contains some pretty clocks and mirrors. Then we returned to the Durbar, and were seated on his Highness's right hand, on the ground. The Nizam sat on a musnud covered with plain white cloth. He was dressed in brocade, faced with fur, and with a shawl over his gown. He kept his right arm, which is palsied, within his gown. He wore a cap with a shawl twice led round it. The whole headdress was shaped like a cone. Behind him sat the

first man in the country, Shums ul Omra. He is a grave-looking thin man. There were many other people, some sitting and some standing. Among the latter were several women. Female sentries, dressed something like Madras sepoy, were on guard before the doors, and about twenty or thirty more women were drawn up before a guardroom in sight. Many women sat in the back part of the room. The Nizam showed us many clocks and curious pieces of mechanism, some of them very obscene. Major K. behaved like a native, and with great propriety. The Nizam gave K., Strachey, and me sirpeches, and all of us betel. For every donation we made a low bow, then we withdrew in a room on one side of the passage. We stopped to talk with the Minister. The room was quite a lumber room, and the servants crowded round us. The Minister talked a good deal. He was plainly dressed, his only ornament being a gold belt and dagger with a diamond buckle. He talked familiarly with the favourite old woman. At last we got up and retired. I was not tired, though we sat so long cross-legged.'

The journal breaks off abruptly on November 14, while the travellers were still at Hyderabad. Several pages are torn out, and the next entry is dated from Poona. At this stage of my narrative it may be convenient to take a short review of the position of the Mahratta Court in the politics of India, and to note some of the events which preceded and followed Mr. Elphinstone's arrival. So much of his personal career is connected with Mahratta history, and with the decline and fall of the Peshwa's Government, that a few pages of explanation will assist the reader in following my narrative to its close.

The founder of the Mahratta Empire was the son of a soldier of fortune, who took service under the Mohammedan Government of Bijapoor, in the Deckan. As the Mohammedan States in the south threw off their allegiance to the rulers of Delhi, they became more dependent on the natives of the country, and the names of many Mahratta chiefs appear in history as taking a part in the wars of the day. Sivajee, who was trained to arms while young, and accomplished in all military exercises, early

distinguished himself as a robber chieftain, and having succeeded in occupying one of the hill forts that abound in the range of ghauts in Western India, he gradually extended his sway over the neighbouring district. The Sovereign of Bijapoor was roused from his apathy when it was too late to check the career of the young adventurer, who, after many struggles and romantic adventures, gained possession of a small principality, and defied Aurungzebe, then the Emperor of Delhi in the height of his power. After his death, which took place in 1680, he left behind a name and character which Elphinstone, in his history, describes as never having been equalled or approached by any of his countrymen.

The fortunes of the Mahrattas languished under the feeble rule of his immediate successors, but the national spirit which Sivajee evoked enabled them to maintain a struggle under partisan leaders with varying success; and it received a new impulse under the administration of the Peshwas of the Sattara Sovereign. These ministers, though second only in rank, rapidly acquired an ascendancy in the State, and became the real founders of the new empire.

Bajee Rao, who is soon to be introduced on the scene, was the fifth in the succession, and was raised to power in 1796. The Mahratta power, which had risen to sudden and surprising eminence in the middle of the last century, was shattered by the battle of Paniput, and broken into a series of States which soon rose superior to the Court of Poona, and by the end of the century the government had fallen into the same state of anarchy as that of the Mohammedans.

The forms of imperial sway will sometimes long survive substantial power, both in the East and in the West. When the Delhi monarchy declined, its vassals used its name and authority to cover usurpations, made treaties, and exercised rights of sovereignty in the name of a prince whom they despised. So also at Poona, the nominal head of the State, the descendant of Sivajee, was a pageant prince, in whose name the government was carried on, and from whose hands even the Peshwa received his investiture. He was treated with the outward respect

due to his rank ; but he was subject to more or less of restraint according as he showed a capacity for rule. Towards the end of the last century the power of the Peshwa had reached its lowest state of decline, while the country was ruled by one of the ablest of Indian administrators, Nana Furnavese, who used the authority of two great names to support his own power, while he held together the tottering fabric of the Mahratta empire. Had he possessed military talents equal to his civil capacity, he might have founded a new dynasty, and revived the sinking State as the Minister of the Peshwa of the Sattara Raja ; but wanting the skill which could direct great armies, his Government was oppressed by the great feudatories of the empire, and at last gave way before the feeble arts of Bajee Rao.

This Mahratta prince, when Mr. Elphinstone joined the Poona Court, enjoyed a temporary independence, having been for some years the sport of the factions he attempted to cajole. Inheriting the fortunes of a great family, and with showy accomplishments and address, he succeeded in displacing Nana Furnavese, and seizing the sovereignty. But the country continued to be ravaged by the armies of the leading Mahratta States, and the authority of the Peshwa was at its lowest ebb. Suddenly, however, the army of Sindia, which had long been encamped in the neighbourhood of Poona, was withdrawn to meet some pressing danger in the north, and the Peshwa signalled his freedom from restraint by acts of vengeance against every chief whom he knew or suspected of being hostile to his own rule or that of his father. Among others, Wittojee Holkar, brother of the Mahratta chief, who was the rival of Sindia, fell into the Peshwa's hands. He was tied to the foot of an elephant, and put to death in the presence of the Peshwa himself, who sat at a window and enjoyed the brutal spectacle. This act sealed the fate of the Peshwa's independence. The execution took place in the spring of 1801. In October of the following year the battle was fought at Poona which overthrew the Peshwa's Government. Jeswunt Rao Holkar had wrongs to avenge, but his object was not vengeance merely, but to get

the possession of the Peshwa's person, and govern in his name. His military success was complete.

The armies of Sindia and the Peshwa were chased from the capital in an engagement, fought almost at the gate of the British Residency, which bore the British flag, and was treated with respect by the combatants. The victory, however, was short-lived. After some vain attempt to set up a brother of Bajee Rao—on which occasion it is curious to observe this pageant of an hour receiving his investiture from the hands of the Sattara Raja—the carcass for which these beasts of prey were struggling was wrested from them by another power, which seized on the opportunity to establish its own authority over them all.

It will not be contended in the present day that the Treaty of Bassein was not the cause of the Mahratta war which followed. A subsidiary alliance with the head of the Mahratta State was a challenge to all the feudatories. We assumed a military, and with it a political authority over a Government that was, even in its weakness, the centre of all the struggles of the Mahratta chiefs, and under which the Mahratta confederates had marched against the Nizam only seven years before. Our interference in their quarrels must be admitted to have been openly aggressive. It would be unfair, however, to judge the policy of Lord Wellesley by the sentiments of more settled times. We were engaged in a formidable struggle at home. The dread of French arms, and even more of French principles,³ influenced the conduct of British statesmen in all parts of the world. To replace by English troops the armies in India officered by Frenchmen was the great aim to which the policy of Lord Wellesley was directed, and this had been successfully accomplished at Hyderabad in the year 1798. The territory of the Peshwa was in a state of anarchy, the prey of

* The Governor-General's minute of August 1798, reviewing the state of India, draws an alarming picture of the danger to British interests from the forces commanded by French officers in the pay of Tippoo, the Nizam, and Sindia, and their supposed tendency to Jacobinism. Alluding to those of the Nizam, he says, 'The chief officers of this corps are all Frenchmen of the most virulent principles of Jacobinism.'

chieftains, the most powerful of whom had forces disciplined by European, chiefly French, soldiers of fortune, and exercised a certain control at the same time over the Courts of Delhi and Poona. A military alliance with the latter recommended itself to Lord Wellesley as the means of checking these growing powers so adverse to our own; but we need not suppose that Lord Wellesley ever imagined that he would carry out such an object without war. He keenly watched the internal troubles in the Mahratta State, and pressed the treaty of military alliance on the Peshwa. His impatience was checked by Colonel Close, who advised him to wait for the progress of events, which would probably bring the prize within his reach. There was no indisposition on the part of Bajee Rao to accept an alliance that would enable him to restore his own power; but the terms hitherto offered were such as no prince would have accepted unless in the last extremity. When, however, he was chased from his capital by a foe whose vengeance he had so much reason to fear, he at once recorded his submission to the British terms.

When Mr. Elphinstone arrived at Poona early in 1802, no one apparently anticipated that we were on the eve of a great struggle, which would require all the resources of our Government to carry us through. Mr. Elphinstone's journal contains frequent allusions to the negotiations that were going on at the various Courts in pursuance of Lord Wellesley's grand plan of offensive and defensive alliances with all the leading Powers, with a view to establish our military supremacy throughout India, and to the exclusion of French influence. Our ascendancy was established in the South by the successful result of the war with Tippoo and the establishment of a subsidiary treaty with the Nizam. It remained now to establish a similar control over the different members of the Mahratta Confederacy. Only two years previous a special embassy was sent to the Court of Berar, and Mr. H. T. Colebrooke, who was selected for the mission, was instructed to give his attention 'to the consideration of a treaty of defensive alliance against the detected projects of Sindia between the Raja of Berar,

the Nizam, and the Company, with power to the Peshwa to accede to it whenever he shall see fit.' The Raja lent a ready ear to the project of an alliance against Sindia; but the success of our negotiations with the Nizam, which were carried on at the same time, and by which the British Government acquired a control over the foreign relations of this State, and thus became a party to the numerous outstanding disputes between the Nizam and the Mahrattas, thoroughly roused the jealousy of the Raja of Berar, and the mission came to an end.

After the failure at Berar the Governor-General now turned to Sindia. It is difficult to believe that Lord Wellesley could have ever seriously entertained a belief that this great prince, whose power was now at its height, would surrender to the British Government the influence which he claimed, and to a considerable degree exercised both at Delhi and at Poona, and sink to the position of a dependent prince, and one can only conjecture that these negotiations were intended to alarm the minor chiefs, and bring them more readily to agree to the proposed alliance.

Mr. Elphinstone's journal, from which I insert some extracts, contains frequent references to these negotiations. It is interesting to note the sensible and dispassionate view which was taken of the situation by so staunch a supporter of the policy of Lord Wellesley as Colonel Close.

'After Fussell and Waring went out, talked with Colonel Close about Lord Cornwallis and Harris's campaign against Seringapatam; then we talked of this newly proposed treaty. Sindia will certainly not accept it. There never was a time more unfavourable for offering it. But it may serve to bring the Peshwa to receive a force. Colonel Close thinks the Peshwa in earnest in his last proposition; I can scarcely think so. How communicative, candid, and sensible Colonel Close is! I do not give attention enough to becoming intimate with him.'

A few days later he returns to the same subject:—

'We began to talk in consequence of the Nizam's Vakeel

coming in. Colonel Close introduced me to him ; his name is Anund Rao. When he went Colonel Close observed that he knew all the discussions that are passing between Sindia and the Peshwa. This led to the mention of our proposition to Sindia. I wondered what Lord Wellesley wanted with Delhi. The Colonel said he could not conceive, and that he had always thought that Lord W. had laid down a most extended plan of defence ; but that he had never suspected him of so much ambition as this proposal showed. He feared that, if Lord Wellesley stayed long in the country, he would take the opportunity of Shah Alum's death to set up one of the princes and bully Sindia. He lamented that we knew not where to stop, and said that no Government that had not fixed the extent of its conquests could be stable in anything. Something else led to the mention of the insubordination of the army, which Colonel Close said constantly occupied a principal part of the attention of Government. He said it was a subject one did not like to talk of, particularly in public ; that it was the source of all Lord W.'s orders about the Lt. Gov. (P), which I had ridiculed. We then talked of the mutiny in Bengal ; then of that at the Mount (?), where two clever fellows raised a party and increased it by pretending to each man that all the rest had joined them ; then laid a plan for seizing the Governor of Fort St. George. They were quashed with the assistance of some King's regiments. I have left out a good deal of this long conversation, which, besides giving me many new views, showed me a good deal of Close's opinions. He talks respectfully of Lord W.

‘Copied Lord Wellesley's instructions to Collins.’⁴ He has much less of justice, moderation, and reciprocity in his mouth than he used to have.

‘*March 7.*—Talked with Colonel Close. He says, in answer to my questions about a Mahratta war, that if anybody could think of such a thing it would be Lord Wellesley, but that even he could not run into so dreadful an evil for any am-

⁴ Colonel Collins was the Resident at the Court of Sindia.

bitious designs. Colonel Close does not think the Peshwa will ever entertain Frenchmen.'

The journal at this period is full of self-reproaches, especially with regard to his own infirmity of temper. His conversation was at all times full of vivacity, and he brought with him from Scotland the national turn for argument. From his own account he was occasionally arrogant and supercilious; but his attacks on his own behaviour read more like the self-reproaches of Hamlet. It will appear that he set himself steadily to cure this failing, and from this time we must date the commencement of that abstemiousness which he practised through life. The habits of society at this time were very convivial, and it required some force of character to carry through such resolutions.

The first of these entries is shortly after his arrival at Poona, and refers to his own conduct at the table of the Resident:—

'Dined. I got out of humour, and talked violently and improperly of Lord Wellesley. I saw the impropriety all the while of attacking a person before another who said he considered himself intimately connected with him. I was led away by my ill-humour, which I attributed to my want of sleep last night.'

'*February 2.*—Went to Colonel Close's; talked with him about the Baroda negotiations. Lord Wellesley has not answered Mr. D.'s pressing letters for orders on that subject during the last nine months. What a careless devil! Shot with pistol, wrote journal, dined, disputed like an ass. Can't one help disputing?'

'*March 4.*—Dined. As I have left off wine for the improvement of my temper, I determined to make an experiment, and see how I should be affected by drink. I drank a good deal of claret—not enough to intoxicate me. It did well enough, and I did not dispute.

'*March 5.*—Had a pleasant conversation at breakfast. Afterwards I had some hot and violent disputes with Waring and Fussell. I was unreasonable and arrogant and supercilious.

By-the-bye, my superciliousness, when I show it, must be shockingly offensive. I express in a few words my contempt for my antagonist's opinion, and then turn from him with disdain. How shocking it is to degrade oneself so! I have behaved thus twice since I came to Poona, besides to-day. I have drunk very little wine since I came to Poona, except in water. I am now accustoming myself to drink my water plain. I shall now drink little or no wine. My principal reason for abstaining is that I may preserve my temper. Excess always makes me irritable. I must pay great attention to preserving my good humour; a contrary disposition in me generally proceeds from an opinion that I am slighted. What can be more contemptible? I am now in a fair way of getting into disputes and ill-humour by this wretched failing. I make myself appear worse than I am. The only effect produced by my jealousy is my being arrogant and overbearing when I am contradicted in a manner which I don't like. This made me ill-humoured with S.'

The topics of conversation, so far as they are reported, are not of the kind to lead to much heat. Here is the record of a day:—

'*February 7.*—Breakfasted. A packet with thirty enclosures about Baroda from Mr. Duncan. Translated "Akhbars;" copied a little; am getting idle. Talked with Colonel Close about Burke; he is in love with him. He read some passages from the "Reflections;" the assertions seem to me as false as the language was beautiful. Colonel C. admires both; we disputed; I went away. Ran over Dow about Baber, Humayun, and Akhbar. Read some of Ferdousi with difficulty: the character is bad, and so small that I had to take a magnifying glass to it. Did the sword exercise; shot; dined. A dispute about the right of nations to remove their kings for misconduct; played billiards and piquet; read a little of Ariosto.

'*February 8.*— . . . Dined. Conversation turned on Pope's Homer. Some passages of Pope were mentioned which I, in silence, compared with the original. I always feel warmed and

inspired by the mention of Homer; no other author gave me such pleasure in reading, or left such an impression. Colonel C. gave an account of Hyder's rise till late. This was a pleasant evening without disputes.'

Some days later he writes: 'Went to Gopal Rao's. We had some singing and dancing; then we had throwing of red powder and mixing of yellow dye, with confusion and merriment. I liked the sly and graceful way in which the dancing-girls pelted us with balls of red powder in a talc shell. When we were completely wetted and dirtied we had dancing again. I do not know whether the dancing at Poona is particularly good, or whether I am getting accustomed to nautching; but I have liked it better since I came to Poona than I ever did before. I was out of spirits coming home, and thought of a Turkish tale. Dined. A dispute about the question which is best, the character of the ancients or the moderns. I supported the claims of the former—to magnanimous actions against Desborough, and to eloquence against the Colonel. I am out of spirits. I have always something real or imaginary to disturb me. "Muhrami razi dili shadai khud kas nemibinam ze khâs ú amra."'⁵

I conclude my extracts from this volume with the report of his presentation to the Peshwa:—

'*February* 11.—Breakfast; billiards; Akhbars. Wrote Strachey, and manual exercises. Talking: Chesterfield. Dressed; went to the Peshwa. We were carried through a large gateway and a sort of court to a wretched staircase, which we ascended, and passed through some poor rooms to the Durbar, a very large room with a row of pillars round it. Near the end of the room was a musnud, to the right of which were Mahratta chiefs, none of them ill-dressed, but none of them like even native gentlemen. They had coloured silk dresses with gold spots on them. All of them had swords, and many of them gauntlets. We were received by Gopal Rao, and seated on the left of the musnud. After some time the

⁵ 'A confidant of the secret of my distracted heart I do not see among high or low.'

Peshwa came in, and I, Waring, and Hamilton were introduced and embraced, in the order mentioned. After we had returned to our seats Bajee Rao made a sign to have us introduced to Chimnajee Appa,⁶ which was done. We then sat. Colonel Close asked after the Peshwa's health. The P. answered, and asked after his; then I, at Colonel C.'s suggestion, asked after the P., and he after me. We sat a little, and then retired to a comfortable room, where the party were Bajee Rao, Chimnajee, Gopal Row, Colonel C., me, and . . .⁷ The business of Seddasheo was mentioned, and much palaver passed. The Peshwa and Chimnajee were invited to come tomorrow to the Sungum.⁸ Then the other gentlemen were called. The Peshwa's people were admitted in the order in which they sat till the room was full. Presently attar and pan were distributed, and we took leave. The Peshwa is a very handsome, dignified, unaffected person. He spoke little to Gopal Rao, and nothing to us. At one time he spoke for a moment with much action and expression to Gopal. The Peshwa's face is good and dignified, though there is something vulgar in his mouth. Chimna is a little ill-looking fellow. We returned, played billiards, dined, played. I was a good deal knocked up.'

⁶ Brother of the Peshwa.

⁷ Illegible.

⁸ The Residency is situated at the Sungum (junction) of two streams.

CHAPTER III.

ASSYE, 1803.

THE TREATY OF BASSEIN AND THE MAHRATTA WAR—JOINS GENERAL WELLESLEY'S CAMP—LETTERS—BAD HEALTH—UNCERTAINTY ABOUT THE MOVEMENTS OF THE ENEMY—BATTLE OF ASSYE—ANECDOTES—THE INTELLIGENCE DEPARTMENT—LIFE IN CAMP.

THE journal from which the extracts in the last chapter are drawn closes abruptly at the end of March 1802, and the next volume in the series before me, a mere fragment, commences as abruptly in the middle of the battle of Argaum, fought at the close of the year 1803. During the interval occurred very stirring events—the struggle between the Mahratta chiefs at the gates of Poona, the flight of the Peshwa, the treaty of Bassein, and the Assye campaign. I have an interesting file of letters addressed by Mr. Elphinstone to his friend Strachey after he joined General Wellesley's camp at the opening of the campaign; but the materials for tracing his personal history during the intervening period are of the scantiest kind. There are occasional allusions in his later correspondence to the detention of the embassy at Poona by Holkar after his victory, and I have two letters to his friend from the neighbourhood of Bombay after the treaty. I assume that he returned to Poona with Colonel Close when the Peshwa was reinstated in his capital, and that he remained there till he joined the camp.

It may be convenient before I enter further on Mr. Elphinstone's own account of the scenes in which he took a part, shortly to recapitulate the course of events which led to the rupture with the Mahratta powers. When Mr. Elphinstone's

journal closed early in 1802 these events were moving rapidly forward.

Sindia's influence, which had become paramount at Poona after the death of Nana Furnavese, in March 1800, was gradually weakened by the triumph of the arms of Holkar in Malwa, and the principal part of his forces were withdrawn from the neighbourhood of the capital to defend his own possessions. The war was carried on with varying success between the two chieftains, and at last Holkar pushed for Poona, and the battle was fought which decided the campaign. Bajee Rao was chased from his capital, took refuge in British territory, and signed the treaty of Bassein. Then followed the rapid advance of the British troops under General Wellesley, his restoration to a nominal authority in May 1803, the gathering of the armies of Sindia and the Raja of Berar on the frontier of the Peshwa's dominions, a corresponding advance of the British armies, and at length open war.

General Wellesley was invested with full powers by the Governor-General on June 24, and war was declared on August 6. The British force available for active service in the South amounted to upwards of 35,000 men of all arms, but this was composed of three separate armies, representing severally the subsidiary states of Baroda, Poona, and Hyderabad, and under distinct commands. They covered an extended line, in order to guard the frontier of these different states against the rapid movements of the predatory hordes, while a large force of nearly 8,000 was held in reserve to keep up the communication with Mysore, from which the army of General Wellesley drew its principal supplies, and to watch the elements of mischief which were rife in the dominions both of the Peshwa and of the Nizam.¹

¹ The distribution of the forces present at the commencement of August 1803 to carry out the Governor-General's policy is given in detail in Lord Wellesley's published narrative. Large as was the force in the Deccan, it was scattered over an extended base to cover the dominions of the States with which he had entered into alliance. The force at Moodgul, a town that lies between the Kistna and Tambodra rivers, was placed there to overawe the Southern Mahratta jagurdars. The abstract is as follows:—

The conditions of a war against the Mahratta armies appear vividly in the letters from which I am about to quote. The British force was surrounded by clouds of Pindarrees, who ate up the country around them, and against whom the utmost vigilance was required to prevent their making a dash into the heart of the territory of the British Government and its allies; while from the same causes the utmost uncertainty existed as to the number and position of the enemy.

Thus we find that when General Wellesley advanced into the enemy's territory, his force, which originally amounted to near 8,000 men of all arms, was so reduced by the necessity of keeping open his communications and occupying posts, that he had little more than 4,500 British troops in action to fight the first great battle of the campaign.

Elphinstone was summoned to join his camp owing to Malcolm's illness. He was nominally the secretary² of a General who wrote his own letters, even to details of field equipment and service, but also on Mahratta politics; for his experience in these matters had ripened during the last two years, and was equal to that of Colonel Close, the Resident at Poona.

In Hindustan, under the personal command of the Commander-in-Chief, General Lake		10,500
At Allahabad and Mirzapore		5,500
In the Deckan, under the immediate personal command of		
General Wellesley		8,903
Subsidiary force, under General Stevenson		7,920
		<hr/> 16,823
At Hyderabad		1,997
At Poona		1,598
At Moodgul		4,032
On the march from Moodgul		1,900
Field force in Guzerat		4,281
Garrisons at ditto, and at Surat		3,071
For the invasion, at Cuttack		5,216
Total, exclusive of gun lascars, pioneers, artificers, and store lascars		<hr/> 54,918

² In his evidence before the Lords' Committee on Indian affairs in 1830, Mr. Elphinstone, describing his services, says, 'I then went as a sort of political assistant or secretary with the Duke of Wellington.' After the peace was concluded the Duke wrote to him at Nagpoor that he had recommended that he should draw the allowance of secretary while he was with the army.

Elphinstone was more fortunate than his friend Metcalfe, who occupied a similar position with Lord Lake in Hindustan, for he was treated at once with kindness and confidence by his General, and his abilities and knowledge were turned to account. He had charge of an Intelligence Department, and his knowledge of the vernacular languages was constantly exercised, while his knowledge of Persian, then the principal channel of diplomacy, brought him into close intercourse with his chief in communicating with the enemy or our allies.

The two first letters of this series to his friend Strachey were written shortly after the treaty was signed, and are dated from Belvedere, in the neighbourhood of Bombay, and from Bassein. They contain no political allusions whatever, and are mere chit-chat letters, full of quotations from Latin poets, and referring to a previous letter full of quotations from Shenstone. It is curious to find him as eager about a trip to Persia as he was some fifteen years later. This plan was evidently suggested by the state of his health. In another letter written about the same time he mentions his having given up wine for the same cause.

Bajee Rao was reinstated on May 13, 1803, and Elphinstone remained at the Residency till he received his summons to take Malcolm's place at General Wellesley's camp in August. The campaign had opened with the attack on the fort of Ahmednuggur, a place of importance, and formerly the seat of one of the Mohammedan kingdoms of the Deckan. It was attacked with vigour, and the garrison made but a faint resistance. Elphinstone joined the camp two days before it fell, and in some uncertainty as to his future duties. He had missed Malcolm, and now wrote to his friend to inquire what duty was intended for him. He arrived in broken health, as the first extract from his letters will show. The letter begins with a description of the fort, and proceeds:—

‘ Ahmednuggur, August 10.

‘ . . . I enjoyed (as the boys at Thomson's would say, enjoyed) myself very much ; but my side aches consumedly, and

I have not quite closed my eyes. One comfort is that if I am left behind by the army I shall be able to apply half-a-dozen lines more of Tibullus' elegy than I could have done at Poona.

"Ibitis Taptæas³ sine me, Messala, per undas ;
O utinam memores, ipse cohorsque, mei."

'If I keep well I shall be very happy here ; but I feel the bad effects of age and experience.

'The cavalry marched on the day before yesterday to the river. Report says we march to-morrow, but I shall know more of that when to-morrow comes, or at twelve to-day. All people here are happy, praising their constant good fortune, and not complaining of their late sufferings.

'Yours ever,

'M. ELPHINSTONE.'

'*Twelve o'clock.*—The General has just set me about getting intelligence, and I am in the old predicament, "nec quid agam scio."'

'Camp at Nuggur, August 17, 1803.

'Dear Strachey,—We march to-morrow, and will get in three or four days to the Godavery. It will take as long to cross the army. If advantage is taken of this, the things may catch me at Aurungabad. After we get to Adjunttee I suppose there will be hard marching in the Doondiah style. The General said yesterday that he supposed, before ten days were over, we should leave our luggage behind ; which he said would often happen. I went into the Pettah to-day. It is full of Mussulman ruins, some of them considerable, and more decayed than I ever saw. The inhabited houses are mean, low places, with mud terraces. Without the Pettah are

³ Waters of the Taptee. In the original 'Ægeas ;' this sad elegy proceeds as follows :—

'Me tenet ignotis ægrum Phæacia terris.

Abstineas avidas, Mors, precor, atra manus !

Abstineas, Mors atra, precor ; non hic mihi mater,

Quæ legat in mæstos ossa perusta sinus.'

tombs, mosques, gardens, &c. ; some of them picturesque, but all neglected, and in ruins. There is nothing in a Mohammedan Government that should make one regret its fall. But I could not help being sorry, as I was riding through the tombs, that the magnificent fellows who built them should be displaced by the sordid wretches that lately had this country. You know, of course, that this is now the Company's territory, and Captain Graham, Collector. Mr. Bellingham is Acting Paymaster, and Mr. Campbell, 78th, acting Major of Brigade. I had yesterday a trial of my appointment. I got twenty hircarras to procure intelligence, interpreted between the General and Gocla,⁴ and translated into Mahratta a letter for the Raja of Colapoor. I did all I had to do, not well, you may guess, but coolly and carefully. I was puzzled twice in talking to Gocla. Once, I did not know the Moors⁵ for a shell, and the other time the English for *mahtaubeh*, a blue light.⁶ My eyes are better, but my side annoys me much. Nothing has been sold but swords. I inquired about books, and heard of an Arabic prayer-book, which I might have got for you if it had not been restored to the owner, a very famous Dervish, who predicted on the day of the attack that our army would take the fort in nine ghurries.

‘M. E.’

‘Camp on the Godavery, opposite, or on the same side with Toka,

‘August 22.

‘Dear Strachey,—Look if the fifth volume of my Herodotus be in any of the bookcases, or anywhere at Poona ; I do not like the appearance of the fourth and sixth being here, and not the fifth. People in camp, and none more than the General, are very anxious for accounts from Poona ; and in consequence of a letter from Brown to Captain Beaumont, saying that De Courcy had had letters from Bengal, mentioning that General Stuart had crossed the Jomanes (*sic*), and that General Perron had come over with his cavalry, I was interrogated about the

⁴ Gocla, a Mahratta chief commanding the Peshwa's forces.

⁵ Hindustani. See note to page 21.

⁶ Lit. ‘moonlight.’

character of De Courcy's news in general. I only said that I believed he took a great deal of pains to get the news. People in the secret are all sanguine. I am with the vulgar, not sanguine.

'August 23.—We are still halted here, the troops and guns getting over the river. You are really the "prince of good fellows and pride of *old men*;" your real energy and ability in executing commissions can never be repaid by my approbation, gratitude, and applause. I shall always regret not having taken your tent, when I could. Everybody tries to get the largest tent he can, and nothing but poverty or regulations limit people. They do not talk in camp of the comfort of being snug and compact, with a fine small tent, easily pitched, and nice light baggage, that soon comes up. Everybody tries, at the utmost expense he can afford, to make himself comfortable. I think they manage it here famously. They have neither the comforts of a Bengal army, nor do they rough it like the Ducks.⁷ The consequence is, that though they are never overloaded, and are always ready to leave their baggage behind, yet they are all perfectly healthy. When I have been here some time longer, I will write you characters, particular and general, of the army, as I did particular ones from Poona. Write soon, long, and often. Keep a sheet of paper on the table (by-the-bye, how are you off for a table?). Write something every now and then, and despatch the record by every post.

'M. E.'

The following letter opens with a complaint of the malignity of his fortune in being called into service while his health is so wretched, and then proceeds:—

'Camp, twelve miles east of Aurungabad, August 30, 1803.

'Camp, September 1.

' . . . I wrote as above on the day before yesterday. We have since made one march south, and one halt. To-

⁷ A cant expression applied to the Bombay service.

morrow we march. Jmeedeh at four. All the heavy baggage of the army is to be left in a village, which has been strengthened by a redoubt and two fleches. All bazaars, bullocks, grain, stores, &c., are left. I take principally a private tent, a palankeen, twelve suits of clothes, two horses, and two camels, with as much grain as I can get and carry. My other things remain here with Nagoo Rao. Sindia is, they say, going east. We are ill off for intelligence. To-day Colonel Stevenson is said to be within eighteen miles of us. Where we go Sindia knows. I am still too sick to go out much, and I see few people but those at head-quarters; the two Closes, Davison, and Noble and Elphinstone sometimes come here. How like fortune it is to put me here at this time just as I wished, and to throw in a liver and mercury. I am dreadfully afraid of going mad. They say the sun always puts people taking mercury mad. The bustle of lessening one's equipment, buying cattle to leave with the rest of the things, &c., has made me like a giant refreshed with wine. I hope I may be able to buy two bullocks, for, while we are moving off with little more than half loads, it is recommended that we should leave carriage for the remaining baggage, as the army may probably not return hither. I fancy after the first push or two we shall go on, 'as when a gryphon in the wilderness,' o'er-and-o'er hill and moory dale, &c. (Milton) pursues the Arimas-pian, whom he never catches, if I recollect the story. Write me oftener, make allowance for my sore eyes and long marches, like a gentleman, and do not keep an account current with me. The river is not fordable. If it was, I should reckon Mrs. Stevenson the first to be assailed. The *δύο κοσμήτορε λαῶν*^s say they are for Hyderabad. You have not set me at ease about my Herodotus as yet. *Vale!* I will write more as events take place. Write me De Courcy's news from Bengal; write anything. Anything is better than what you now write, viz., nothing.

'Yours ever,

'M. ELPHINSTONE.'

^s The two commanders of the forces—i.e., General Wellesley and Colonel Stevenson.

‘ Camp on the Godavery, forty miles S S.E of Aurungabad,

‘ September 3, 1803.

‘ Dear Strachey,—I have received your letter of August 30. I will now reply to it, before I proceed to tell the news of this part of the world. I know the truth of what you say about dating camp, as well as you, and used to think it very strange in General Wellesley; but sometimes one has nothing better to put: for instance, Camp near Bopalgaum would not be better, for how would you find out such a place, if there was one. If you date as I have done to-day, you probably mislead your correspondent, for when people march in this way,⁹ who can tell east and west, or how far you are off in a direct line. Our march to and from Aurungabad hither was, as I understand, thus—¹ However, I shall always say something about our marches when I can put no better date than camp. I have long since learned to supply abundance of ifs, in the most positive story, and therefore doubted De Courcy’s news. The General believed it at once, and all the rest did the same. I do not know what to write you. I never see the General’s letters to Colonel Close. So I may repeat. The enemy were yesterday sixty miles east of this, ten coss² from the Godavery, on the north side. The river, I am sorry to say, is fordable in several places, which is unusual. If the rains that have been drowning Major Malcolm have extended north, this river will rise; for which I am ready to pay 100% down. Sindia has certainly sent for some of his infantry, I believe Begum Sumroo’s.³ The people in Sindia’s army talk boldly of Hyderabad. We made a very long march yesterday, owing to a mistake about the distance of the river. (It was thought to be sixteen miles and was near twenty-three.) The line got

⁹ A zigzag line is traced in the original. ¹ An irregular semicircle.

² Coss, about two miles.

³ The Begum Sumroo was originally a person of obscure origin; she attached herself to the fortunes of a French adventurer, who received the nickname of *Sombre*, from his complexion (hence Sumroo). After many adventures she assumed the command of her husband’s forces after his death and took the field, and made terms with the British Government on the conclusion of the Mahratta war, obtaining a jageer near Delhi, which she held till her death.

in by one. We halted to-day. I forgot to say that our Cherry Fouj was countermanded by an after order, the same day I wrote you. I have for yesterday and to-day been troubled with my old Bombay violent pain in my liver side, which frightened me then, but which now I think a good sign, for I recovered immediately after having it at Belvedere. I mean the pain that requires pillows, &c. At present I can only lie on my back with my head high. I can sit well enough, if I stoop; but if I stand, or walk, or laugh, or breathe deep, or lie on my side, or sit upright, or twist myself, the pain is shocking. I have now written an intolerable long letter. I wish you would write me at least as long answer, considering long marches, sore eyes, &c., “and that both war and sickness wear out the Greeks,” as Achilles says in his first speech that begins with *damme*. Ἀτρεΐδῃ, νῦν δ’ ἄμμε.⁴ I conclude for the present, as you will perceive.

‘Yours ever,

‘M. ELPHINSTONE.’

‘Camp twelve miles from our last ground,

‘September 5, 1803.

‘Dear Strachey,—We marched twelve miles, I believe, along the Godavery, which about the middle of our march I saw close to us. They say the right of the line is close to the river now. We cannot see it from this. Before I make it up for good with Fullan⁵ I must show that Weave’s wit is not original; it is consolation administered by an old shepherd to a young one in Spenser’s “Shepherd’s Calendar:”—

“Lewdly complainest, thou lazy ladde,
Of winter’s wracke for making thee sadde;
Must not the world wend in his *common* course,
From good to bad, and from bad to worse,
From worse unto that which is worst of all?”

This, by the way, is very strange consolation, but has the example of antiquity, and the imitation of modern times on its

⁴ Mr. Elphinstone evidently presumed on his friend not verifying the quotation. In the original the line runs, Ἀτρεΐδῃ, νῦν ἄμμε.

⁵ Fullan (lit., ‘such a one’), sometimes forlorn, and constantly applied by the writer to Sir B. Close.

side. Horace says, "Be gay and happy" (or something like that), for "Nihil est ab omni parte beatum." Then, "Why should we be melancholy boys, whose business 'tis to die?" and "Let us eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die." But after all, such arguments as those are better than *our* system of philosophy, which is contrived to put everything in the worst light. It has nothing to recommend it but its truth, if it has that. I intend, "vela dare atque iterare cursus relictos." I shall set about believing that all is for the best; and now I think of it, as Vincent used to say, all is for the best. I shall sing a *Te Deum* on the defeat and death of Ahirman. Why should one increase one's misfortunes by thinking that "in nature's common course" they are to grow worse. How often have you and I got out of gloom and misery into gaiety and sunshine? Why should not we again? "Non si male nunc et olim sic erit." You will not always be a secretary, nor I an invalid, but you cannot always be happy by your nature. "Expect not pleasures unalloyed with pain," which is a very good line indeed. By the way, I have learned much of my insane philosophy from the Persians, and particularly from Khyoom and Mirza Naseer. We have nothing of the sort in English except the song of "Let us all be unhappy together." Now for my good views. The intolerable heat of the winds, and particularly the strong hot wind, shows that the rains are over, and that we shall now have the most delightful season of the year. The pain in my side, that confines me to my chair, prevents my exposing myself as I might otherwise have done. It is, besides, a sign that the inflammation is superficial.

'Yours ever,

'M. ELPHINSTONE.'

'Camp, September 7, 1803.

'Dear Strachey,—We marched twelve miles yesterday easterly, and are now, I am told, two or three miles from the Godavery. I finished Spenser's "Shepherd's Calendar" yesterday. Much as I like Spenser, I think his Pastorals have been immoderately praised, and that making the crown of eclogue

writing pass from Theocritus and Virgil to him was gross profanation. His Pastorals are much rougher, more antique, and more like Chaucer (whom I believe they are meant to imitate) than the "Fairy Queen." Here are the first lines of two eclogues, one line good and one bad:—

"Is not thilke the mery moneth of May?"

"Tell me, good Hobbinoll, what garres thee greete."

'I was very unwell all yesterday, which prevented my writing you. My side was so painful as to prevent my breathing without difficulty. It had been intended that next halt I should have a blister; but yesterday evening in comes Dr. Gilmour, says he has made up his mind, and, to conclude, applies a blister. About two hours afterwards I go to dinner, and the General says he heard that Raghojee has halted with the baggage within fifteen miles, while Sindia went on to Jalna; that he had ordered the troops to hold themselves in readiness, and would have a dash as soon as intelligence should come in. Who now was wobegone but me with my blister? After dinner, while waiting for news, about nine we heard a drum on the left of the line, which was soon distinguished to be beating to arms. The General sent for his horse, mounted him immediately, and set off. We all followed as our horses came; and all this was owing to Gocla beating off at nine, and, according to his laudable custom, beating off with the beat to arms. So we all came back separate. I found I could ride so well that I determined to go with the General in case of a push, to stay all night in my palankeen, and mount when we saw the enemy. So we went to bed, waiting for the long rolls. But no long rolls disturbed us. My blister annoyed me a little, but I had taken an opiate, and slept well; and instead of pushing on we are still here at one P.M. Your very dismal letter from Poona, in answer to my dismal letter from Aurungabad, has just come in. I believe the enemy would go to Hyderabad if they could; because the ravaged country would starve them if they tried to go to Poona. But wherever they go they never can leave this army far behind. If they go

straight to any place I think they will be run down. If they wind and double, they may gain a march on the General, but not more. The General has not neglected the protection of Poona in any of his plans. At present it is not exposed, the enemy being near two hundred miles from it, with us between it and them. I do not know why you think the General deficient in intelligence. There is always speedy information of every movement of the enemy, who, you know, are a mighty army of sixteen thousand horse, very ill-mounted, and without one gun. With respect to the General's running them down, while they wander, as they are doing now, they have great advantages in the uncertainty of their movements; but if ever they take any expedition in hand, I think they will soon be run down. If the enemy go your way we shall soon meet; but I do not think there is any chance of it. The object of a *cherry fougj*, without guns, with two armies after it, must be to fly about and plunder the richest country it can find, not to march through exhausted countries, to make revolutions in cities. Do not write me a letter full of black melancholy, and common bile, if I say that I am incredibly stupid and sleepy to-day, and that my side is little better for my blister. I have observed that a dismal letter draws a dismal answer, so I stop. If I do not get a very witty letter, full of good humour, before you get this I shall complain.

‘Yours ever,

‘M. ELPHINSTONE.’

‘Camp near Peepulgaon, Sept. 11, 1803.

‘Dear Strachey,—I have received yours of the 8th. I have already, if I recollect right, written you the enemy's motions regularly, as far as I knew them. Where they are now I am not certain: they cannot be far off, as their Pindarrees annoy our foragers. I heard of them yesterday at Jalna, which may be (I speak between guess and hircarra report) forty miles from this. But I think I heard it repeated by a native intelligencer to the General to-day that they had marched to Amber. Amber, I am told, is said by some to be four, and by others six or seven miles from this. It is certain that a party of one hundred

of Visnapa's horse who were sent out (I do not know why—I suppose to reconnoitre) fell in with two hundred of the enemy's horse, engaged, and had one man killed, seven or eight wounded, and lost eight horses. They say they beat the enemy. This looks as if the enemy were near. (They had sent five hundred Pindarrees to harass this army, Sept. 12.) I fancy the General had some intelligence last night; for though he intended to have halted for his supplies, he marched this morning, and we came twelve miles N.W. We passed the place where Visnapa's people had the skirmish. After we got to our ground and had breakfasted, news was brought that 250 (they were not near so many, Sept. 12) of the Mysore horse had gone out to forage, and while so employed they were set on by an equal number of the enemy, who took their horses. The man, being asked, said he did not know how many horses were lost, but it seemed as if the whole or great part of the 250 were taken; (there were five or six taken, Sept. 12). The General sent the cavalry piquets to look after the enemy's party and forbade cattle being sent far to graze. It seems as if the enemy made this march south to intercept the General's supplies, of which a great deal will be at Raukisbaun, twenty-four miles up the river from our last ground, to-day or some day soon. Their route, I believe, was straight for that place; their course, since they came up the Ghauts, seems to me to have been thus.⁶ But as I have never heard the distances or bearings of places where they went, my ideas are probably all wrong. I have heard nothing of the General's plan. I fancy it is to keep close to the enemy. In answer to part of your letter about being left behind, I may venture to say I am recovering. I have got rid of the great violence of my pain, and can now lie on my left side and a little on my right. I have not had much blue devils; business and change kept me clear of them. Now for your questions. Sindia and Bosla are certainly come in (if you mean up the Ghaut, have certainly) south of Aurungabad. The two chiefs move together with most of the army and

⁶ A line is drawn first to the south-west, then due west, and then north-east, crossing the first.

baggage. Seddasheo Rao, with five thousand men, has hitherto been after Colonel Stevenson. Sumroo's corps has not joined. I do not know what it consists of, nor where it is.

'Yours ever,

'M. ELPHINSTONE.'

'Camp at Peepulgaon, Sept. 12, 1803.

'Dear Strachey,—I had written to you yesterday, but towards evening I had reason to think most of the reports I had writ false, so I kept back the letter and have corrected it. The enemy have made a march west, and I believe a little north, of Jalna to Dabarry. The Pindarrees here are still troublesome. Some gentlemen have lost camels, &c. They are entrenching round this village; so I fancy we shall leave our baggage and tents here, and set after the enemy; but this I do not think will happen till the stores come. Yet the General never does a thing of this sort till the last moment, that he may keep his secret. So perhaps we shall move light to-night. I would ask you to forgive this ink, but it is not in human frailty to forgive it. I was delighted to-day by the arrival of my setringle, &c. I do not know when I shall have a light heart again. As to being left behind, I will not be left behind as long as it is possible for me to move. I believe I should die if I was at Ahmednuggur or Aurungabad. I have found no difficulty in moving yet.

'Yours ever,

'M. ELPHINSTONE.'

'Camp at Midgaon (the old place),

'September 16, 1803.

'I am sorry I wrote you the enemy's force; from the nature of things it must have been wrong. I wrote General W.'s opinion. The hircarras never mention them as less than a lac; others say "they amount to two lacs and a half;" then if you smile, "there may be 5,000 more or less, God knows." Is it possible that General W. should write to Colonel Close every day and never mention the enemy's having invaded the country?

Except the marches of the army there is little I can write for certain. As to writing distinctly, it is impossible to write distinctly when one has not distinct information. Then you talk about particulars. If I was to write such as you wish, they might be entertaining, but there would not be a word of truth in them. Look into the detail of my information. I have some Jasooses,⁷ selected by Colonel C.'s brahmin for their stupidity, that they might not pry into state secrets, who go to Sindia's camp, remain there a phaur⁸ in fear, often forced to cut grass and carry loads. During that time they learn the name of the village where Sindia is. I have shown you how correct they are about numbers, and what else can they learn? The enemy are vigilant and anxious to discover spies. They have kept, and probably hanged, one of mine. In addition to this the General sometimes mentions the news from Stevenson and from other quarters, and these are my channels. The enemy are now within three coss of Jafferabad, at Yelnee. They are, it is thought, going to Adjunttee to join Gopal Rao, who is coming up with two brigades, and forty guns. They have a light army after Colonel Stevenson, and about 500 Pindarrees here. These rascals are never seen, or if seen never known from Gocla's people; and they plunder like the devil. I have my pain worse than ever, except during the bad attack, but am reckoned recovering, because I have left off mercury. I can't lie on my right side—hæret lateri, &c. Yours ever,

'M. ELPHINSTONE.'

'Camp at ———, twelve miles from Midgaon,

'September 22, 1803.

'Dear Strachey,—I write in haste to request you to beg Colonel Close to order Kishna Rao to send off five pair of hircarras more, as one of those who came before has been taken, and four have run away. I am desired to do this by the General. I wish Kishna Rao would try to get intelligent fellows. If they understand Moors it would be better, but that does not much signify. The sooner the five pairs are sent the better. Nothing

⁷ Spies.

⁸ A watch of the day or night of three hours.

of ours has been stopped by Pindarrees yet; but if anything should, ten men, who have nothing to carry, may make their way easily. We were yesterday close, *i.e.*, within half a mile of Colonel Stevenson. I saw many of our old friends. We are now within sixteen miles, at farthest, of Sindia, and I hope soon to see some of our enemies. He is either at Bokerdhun or Hussanabad, I think certainly the latter, with all his horse, from 16,000 to 20,000, two brigades, one of them Mrs. Sumroo's, and forty pieces of cannon. I hope confidently that we shall have an engagement on the day after to-morrow. Even *they* (Sindia) talk of fighting on Saturday, and this is Thursday. But who knows what a native will do; perhaps they will give us the slip and get to the southward.—Yours,

‘M. ELPHINSTONE.’

‘Camp at Cadool, or Cadouly, September 24, 1803.

‘Dear Strachey,—We have had a very bloody, but a very successful engagement. Yesterday we marched from Paugry, about eleven miles, to a village about five miles from this. When we were marking out our ground, news was brought that the enemy was near (we thought them either at Hussanabad or Bokerdhun). I have not time to describe the action, as it is near dawn time. We discovered the enemy's camp, crossed several ravines and one nulla under a constant cannonade, and had nearly formed in line before we had much loss. While we were forming, the enemy's infantry and guns advanced on us, and their cannonade was very destructive. Our line pushed on, and after much loss drove them from their guns, but they so far outflanked us, that, as we advanced, they opened more guns on our right, while the troops in front retreated. They also got possession of some of our own guns, that we had left behind, and turned them on us. The 74th, which was on the right of the line, suffered dreadfully. I believe they were cut in on by horse, but this I do not *know*. The horse did no other harm, if they did that. All agree that the 74th would have been cut off to a man, if it had not been for the cavalry. The latter had at first been ordered to watch the motions of a

large body of horse, who were advancing towards us; they were afterwards ordered to protect the right of the infantry, and they came in time to save the 74th. They afterwards made an unlucky charge at a body of infantry. They were, I believe, unsuccessful, and Colonel Maxwell was killed. The General went with the 78th and 7th Native Cavalry to drive off the fellows who had guns, which concluded the battle. We have taken near 60 (above 57) pieces of cannon, and have cut up a number of the enemy.

‘Yours ever,

‘M. ELPHINSTONE.’

The preceding letter gives some particulars of the killed and wounded, but they are supplied more fully in the interesting letter which follows, written a few days later. The original is unfortunately lost, and it will be observed that the concluding portion is an abridgment by his friend:—

‘Camp near Assye, ten miles from Jafferabad, Sept. 27.

‘I am going to write you a detailed account of the battle of Assye, which, after sending you a short letter, I deferred doing till I should see the ground and hear the returns. Some points on which you will wish to be informed, and on which I cannot give you clear answers, are the following: What were the enemy’s numbers? What was the nature of their troops? Who commanded? What was their plan? How came you to meet? What impression has the action made? What is it thought they will do? I mention these to account for want of clearness hereafter. I learn that, when we met Colonel Stevenson at Badnapoor, it was determined between him and General Wellesley to make three marches, and then fall on the enemy on the same day. The enemy were then thought to be at Bokerdhun, thirty miles in a direct line from where we were on the first day. On the day after our first march, news was brought (false news it turned out), that the enemy had moved to Hussanabad, a good deal farther to the west, and intended to go still farther west. Next day we moved north to Naulnair, where we were taking our ground,

when we learnt that the enemy were close to us. Shortly after the General was told that the enemy had sent off all their horse to attack Colonel Stevenson. On this, he sent to order the cavalry, who were taking up their ground, to come on, and to order the Quartermaster-General to take up the colours again; which was done. I was at this time behind the General in my palankeen; but seeing that something was going to happen, I got out. I found the cavalry almost come up, and the General and his party dismounted, loading their pistols. I followed their example, and then mounted. I suppose it was when the General sent for the cavalry that he also sent for the infantry, and ordered one battalion under Colonel Chalmers to stay behind with the baggage. After we mounted again, we went on two miles. (Observe that "I suppose" is almost always understood about distances, times, numbers, and other things difficult to judge of.) We then came to the brow of a rising ground, from which we saw the enemy in two large seemingly regular camps, at the distance of two miles from us. I have put down the infantry camp (*viz.* in the plan); I don't know where the other was. After looking at the country for a short time, and reconnoitring the enemy through a glass, the General left the cavalry halted, and rode back to bring on the infantry; leaving Captain Johnson, the engineer (a very active, zealous, cool, useful man), to find out the road for the guns. This he easily did; for the descent was not great, and in about an hour the infantry came up, and were shown the road. The General then rode back to the cavalry, who had formed in line (at A) facing a very large body of the enemy's horse (B), who were advancing up the rise, which was very gentle. Here I thought we should have a charge, and as the General kept riding off towards the infantry, every now and then, to see how they got on, and then back to the cavalry, I was kept in great anxiety for fear he should go off, and miss the charge; for I had no notion there would be anything worth seeing with the infantry. At last, the enemy's horse halted a half or a quarter of a mile off, and sent on a few fellows to fire at the cavalry; they shot a horse; and then

some troopers were sent to drive them back, and all was quiet. The General left the cavalry to watch them, and rode off to the head of the infantry (C C), which was now come nearly opposite the enemy's camp (D D). At this time the enemy began to cannonade. The shot fell pretty thick round, but did scarce any damage, on account of the distance. However, it bounded off the ground, and made the people duck, and one shot somehow or other hit Mr. Campbell, Brigade-Major to General Wellesley, in the heel, and brought him off. We kept moving on, and got among ravines, when they cannonaded hotly but still ineffectually; except that one shot went close to the General, and took his orderly trooper's head off. Then we came to the Kaitna Nulla (E E), and found the only ford good for guns (F). After some delay we got the guns over, and began to form the line (G G), at right angles to the nulla. Our guns opened and fired while the line was forming, and, after it was formed, the enemy (H H), who were advancing on us, and beginning to get near us, renewed and redoubled their cannonade, which had slackened. It was no longer ineffectual, for it knocked down men, horses, and bullocks, every shot. When the line was formed, it was found that many of our guns could not be dragged on for want of hands. The General then told them to limber up, but the bullocks were killed. He then ordered them to be left behind, which was done, but not immediately, and all the time the men were getting knocked down very fast. The General was very impatient; he was forming the line to the left himself; but he sent several messages to the right to move forward, which was done at last. The army was drawn up in two lines. In the first were the piquets, two native battalions, and the 78th. In the second were two battalions and the 74th.

'The line advanced under a very hot cannonade. When we got near enough the enemy to hear them shout, the General rode back to the cavalry, whom he had sent for, and who were now in the rear (I I). He rode full gallop, told Colonel Maxwell to take care of the right of the infantry, and rode back at speed. In coming back as in going there was the *Divil's*

own cannonade (an exquisite Irish phrase which I have found out), and three horses of our party were knocked down. The General galloped forward to a line which was before us, and we were getting near it very fast when it fired a gun our way; we were barely out of musket shot. Somebody said, "Sir! that is the enemy's line." The General said, "Is it? Ha, damme, so it is!" (you know his manner) and turned. Before we got to our own line we had the satisfaction to fall in with several pieces of fine shining brass cannon which the enemy had just left. We were away about ten minutes or a quarter of an hour. Our line continued to advance, and the enemy's right and right centre (so all say; I doubt whether their right fell back) fell back on their second line (KK), which was on the Joee Nulla (LL). Their left stretched beyond our right flank, and it kept its ground. When the enemy's right and centre retreated, our line changed front (MM), so as to face the second line, on which we advanced, and this was the hottest part of the action. The party on the right were very troublesome; round and grape flew in all directions. About this time the 74th, who were now at the right of our line (N), suffered prodigiously from the cannon, and were so thinned as to encourage a body of the enemy's horse to charge them. They did so, and, I am assured by more than one eye-witness, broke and dispersed the few of them who had survived the cannonade. This was the critical moment. The 74th (I am assured and convinced) was unable to stop the enemy; and I know that the sepoys were huddled in masses, and that attempts which I saw made to form them failed; when "the genius and fortune of the Republic" brought the cavalry on to the right. They charged the enemy, drove them with great slaughter into the Joee Nulla, and so saved the 74th. After this the cavalry crossed the Joee, and the infantry, continuing to advance, drove the enemy's infantry across the Joee. They seemed to retreat in good order; but some of them must have been broke, for the cavalry, which had then crossed the nulla, charged up its bank (PP), making a dreadful slaughter, but affording a most delightful spectacle to us, who were halted on the side nearest

the field of battle unable to cross on account of our guns. The cavalry having thus crossed on the right of the line, and charged along in front of it, recrossed to the left and were formed (Q Q) to charge a body of infantry (R)—I fancy part of the enemy's right that we had passed, for we were much out-flanked both the right and left. When the General, returning from the nulla with the 78th (sss), came close to them, he took the 7th N.C. from them. The General was going to attack a body of the enemy (from their left, I believe), who, when we had passed them, went and spiked our artillery and seized our guns, and recovered some of their own, and turned them all against our rear, which annoyed us a good deal. When the General was returning to the guns there was a heavy fire, and he had his horse killed under him. Soon after he came up to the cavalry, the enemy cannonading them hotly as they were formed to charge. Just as he was leaving them I heard the dragoons huzza and saw them begin to charge; rode a little way after them; but, thinking that I had stayed all day with the General, and that when I left him he was in hot water, I rode to him, but found that the enemy were moving off. We got possession of the guns and halted, and so ended the engagement. I forgot to mention the result of the cavalry charge (which must have terminated just after I quitted them; for I saw them pull up to a trot before I made up my mind to leave them). They were brought up by the fire; first halted, and then walked, and then trotted back. In this last charge Colonel Maxwell was killed. After staying some time with the 78th, I rode with the General to the Joee, and there I lost him. I then went to the place where the 74th lost so many men, where I had not been before. The ground was covered with dead and wounded men and officers of the 74th and of the enemy. After dark I found the General in the village of Assye (U), close to the place where the 74th suffered so much. There the General passed the night, not in "the pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war," but on the ground, close to an officer whose leg was shot off, and within five yards of a dead officer. I got some curry and

bloody water, which did not show at night, and lay down and slept without catching cold after all my nursing. This battle has been glorious, though so bloody. We had on the field four N. Battalions 700 strong originally, but with 100 men each on the rear-guard and the same on baggage guards, they were reduced to $500 \times 4 = 2,000$; the 78th, 600; the 74th, 569; the artillery, 150; total 3,319. The cavalry at most 1,200. Total of all descriptions, 4,519. I have made the battalions too weak, and have not counted the Pioneers. The General said we had 5,000 and odd. The number of killed and wounded returned to the General is 1,584. The 74th lost killed and wounded exactly 400. The whole loss of Europeans must have been 600.'

In another part of his letter he says: 'I forgot to say we fired musketry and charged because both were ineffectual and made no impression.' He says too: 'Captain Cunningham and I are the only two of ten of the General's party who have neither been touched in ourselves or horses. Captain C. was well dusted, and I was moderately dusted, and wounded.' His syce⁹ received a shot in the back. He speaks of the enemy's loss being nearly as great as ours. He says the dead are all large stout Bengalees—meaning, I suppose, people like our Bengal sepoys.

It appears, I believe, by some other account that the enemy left 1,200 dead on the field. The General writes that he has received accounts of the road by which the enemy retreated being strewn with their wounded and dying, and that the number of infantry which Sindia collected when he was below the Ghaut was 200.

Explanation of the Plan.¹

A. Our cavalry on the hill where the enemy was first seen.

⁹ Groom.

¹ The plan is slightly altered from Mr. Elphinstone's sketch, in order to show the junction of the two nullas. It agrees very closely with the plan which was published in Lord Wellesley's narrative of the campaign. The latter does not give the camp of the enemy, but in its place there is a line representing the enemy's first position parallel to the Kaitna Nulla.

B. Their body of horse. Sindia is said (by the General among others) to have been in this party.

C. The march of our infantry in column.

D. The enemy's camp. I fancy their guns were drawn up parallel to the nulla when first they cannonaded us, and that afterwards they changed their position to what it is at H H H.

E. The Kaitna Nulla.

F. The ford.

G. The infantry of our army in two lines, with the names of regiments marked.

H. The enemy's first line.

I. Our cavalry formed in the rear of the infantry.

K. The enemy's second line, which I never saw, and am not sure about, were there.

L. The Joee Nulla.

M M. Our troops after changing their position. The piquets kept a great deal too much to the right, and left a breach in the line which the 74th was obliged to fill up, and the piquets were passed by the 74th and the two battalions.

N. The place where the 74th suffered so much.

O. The cavalry going to charge the party who were annoying the 74th. The place in the Joee Nulla where there was a slaughter of that party is marked with a large L.

P P. The cavalry charging the broken infantry of the enemy.

Q Q. The cavalry formed to charge the last time. I don't know precisely where they crossed.

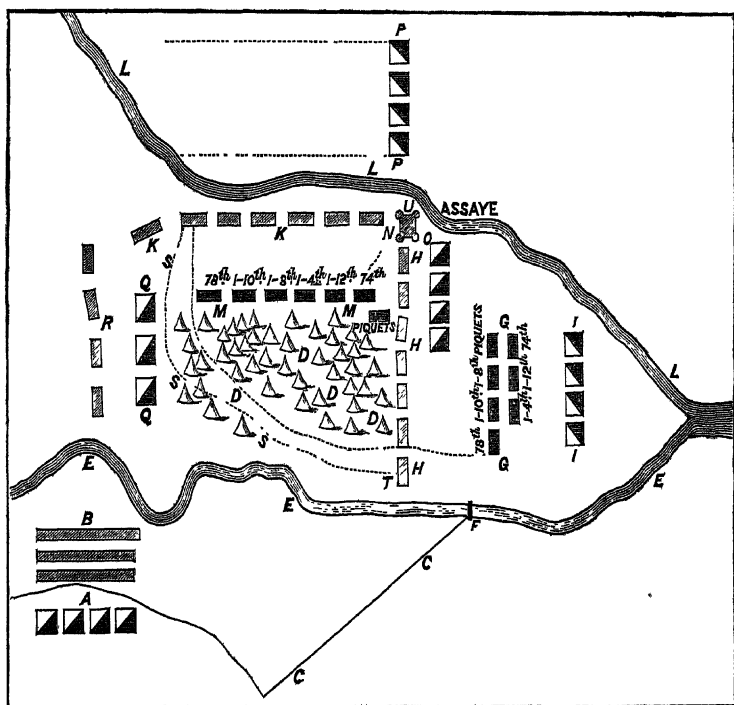
R. Some infantry of the enemy. The General says, not their right, but a new formation.

S S. The General returning with the 78th, and afterwards joined by the 7th N.C.

T. The last position taken by the 78th and 7th N.C.

U. The village of Assye.

I have the copy of another letter before me describing the engagement, addressed to his friend John Adam. It is a clear and soldierlike account of the battle, but is wanting in some of



SKETCH PLAN OF BATTLE OF ASSYE.

From Mr. Elphinstone's Sketch.

the personal details that give such interest to the preceding narrative. I give a few extracts only:—

‘You will have heard that this army has fought a very bloody battle, and gained an important victory. Sindia and the Raja of Berar, after trying what they could do with an army of horse only, and after getting as far south as the Godavery river, changed their plan, and moved north towards the Adjutee Pass to meet a detachment of infantry and guns which Sindia ordered to join them. The detachment consisted, it is said, of seventeen battalions, five hundred strong, and upwards of a hundred guns. General Wellesley, after waiting for some time for supplies, followed the enemy, and Colonel Stevenson also moved north, and halted at Budnapoor. The two divisions met there on the 21st inst., and it was settled that they were to move separately towards the enemy, and both attack them on the 24th. When this was settled, we marched on the 22nd to Paugry and on the 23rd to Naulnair, at which place we thought the enemy were close at hand. General Wellesley sent for the cavalry and pushed on about three miles to rising ground, from which we saw the enemy’s camp.’

Then follows the account of the engagement to its close. He adds:—‘We saw enormous bodies of horse on all sides, but they behaved very ill. They came almost within musket shot and threatened us often, but never charged but once, when they cut up the 74th.’

‘All agree this has been the bloodiest battle ever fought in India. Cuddalore is the only one I have heard compared with it, and there the force of our men was twelve thousand at least, and their loss sixteen hundred killed and wounded.

‘The enemy have fled northward, and are getting down the passes as fast as they can. Colonel Stevenson marched after them this morning, after having reinforced us with one battalion. His force is 7,000 firelocks and 750 cavalry, but they are ill off for artillery. I got on horseback early in the morning of the action (the first time for a month, owing to a liver complaint),

and kept close to the General the whole day; slept almost supperless (and really breakfastless and dinnerless) on the ground in the open air, without finding the smallest inconvenience.

‘The General will doubtless get great credit for this; I am sure he deserves it. It is nothing to say of him that he exposed himself on all occasions, and behaved with perfect indifference in the hottest fire, for I did not see a European do otherwise (nor do I believe people ever do); but in the most anxious and important moments he gave his orders as coolly and as clearly as if he had been inspecting a corps, or manœuvring at a review. I am afraid to say how well I like the General, for though I have known him for some time, I have only been with him six weeks, and I may change my mind; but all that can be said in six weeks’ acquaintance I would have said before this action, which has not lowered my opinion of him.’

‘This is all Mount says, except that one of his servants had run away and taken some of his clothes with him; and that his syce (the man who in this country takes care of his horse) received a spent ball on his back in the action.’

‘Camp at Assye, October 1, 1803.

‘There is always something new coming out about the battle, but I am as sick of writing about it as I am of writing about the Poona letter,² and heartily wish for another. Poor Captain Macgregor, of the 7th Cavalry, died last night, and was buried to-day. I did not go to his funeral, but was near enough to hear the melancholy sound of the trumpets over his grave. I have been made so idle by the constant visiting and talking parties (really interesting ones) to which this battle gave rise, that I cannot turn back to Salamis and Plateæa with any satisfaction. I am, in the meantime, reading all Shakespeare critically, and have got as far as the second play, “The Two Gentlemen of Verona.” Pray read that play. The critics deny that it is Shakespeare’s. Theobald admits it is his, but says

² A missing letter to his friend.

it is his worst. Johnson says it has many passages that are "eminently beautiful;" and I say (if I may say anything after Johnson) that it is an excellent play, superior to the run of Shakespeare's plays, except the famous ones. I have borrowed a capital Shakespeare for reading. It has not one note, and I have (in consequence) never met with a difficulty. I wish your two corporas³ were here, you have no manner of use for them. You could be in no danger but from Polyphemus⁴ (forgive such a joke), and he is north of the Nerbudda. If we had them we might continue to act in two divisions, which at present is impossible. I have "picked up famously" since last action. I have now a prodigious appetite for my dinner, although I take at two o'clock a glass of port and water and a biscuit!—no! a loaf, an actual loaf, without leaving a crumb. This I indulge to turn the attention of my stomach from animal food, which is bad for me. I drink little wine; but after all I have still my pain in my side, and I fear shall relapse. At first I thought my good health returning so suddenly was merely a spurt, and that I should pay for my fatigue afterwards; but, by the blessing of God, it has happened otherwise.

'An orderly book of the enemy's has been found as late as September 8. I am sorry to say that there is a Lieutenant Stuart still among the officers. The British part of them can expect no mercy, for they might have come over in the late engagement; and there are reports believed, though I do not think them proved, of one Englishman (or man who spoke the English language as his own) calling to another in the hearing of Major Malally and some wounded of the 74th, "You speak the language better than I; tell those horse to go round and cut up the wounded." At all events, serving against one's country is to my mind the most horrid of crimes, and it certainly is for our interest to check it in India. I have not heard anybody say they had the story I have put down from Major M., and most stories are lies, we all know.

'Yours ever,

'M. ELPHINSTONE.'

³ Corps.

⁴ Applied to Holkar, who had lost an eye.

‘Camp at Assye, Octo^r 3, 1803.

‘Dear Strachey,—I have just received yours of the 29th. I am glad my account of the battle was intelligible. I have written you a much fuller one, which for that reason will probably be more confused. It will also contradict the first account in one place at least ; for I thought at first that we met twice with one winding nulla, instead of which we marched from one nulla to another, and I do not believe at first I mentioned our changing front. You will see in my long letter the reason why I said nothing of Sindia’s Europeans—viz. we knew nothing of the nature of Sindia’s troops, or by whom they were commanded. I might have said that no Europeans had come over, and that Brig.-Maj. Grant and Mr. Serle, of the 19th Dragoons, had attacked a European, well dressed, with much gold lace and ruffles, and had made some ineffectual cuts at him. Ineffectual at the time, I mean ; for I am told Mr. Serle saw his body afterwards. The General saw a dead man without a coat, whom the pioneers were burying as one of our Dragoons, but, the General says, was not in their regimental pantaloons. I fancy this was Mr. Serle’s man. I and others saw a very fair dead man, dressed entirely like a Hindustanee in all respects. Most people say he was a Frenchman. I think it more likely that he was a Persian, or even a Moghoolza (*sic*). There was a Roman Emperor who said he liked the smell of a dead enemy. If he did he was singular in his taste. We are horribly perfumed with such a smell as he liked, but I would rather smell a living enemy. I went yesterday evening to the field of battle. It was a dark, cloudy evening. I rode by myself, and saw *plurima mortis imago*. Some of the dead are withered, their features still remaining, but their faces blackened to the colour of coal, others still swollen and blistered. The Persian I mentioned was perfect everywhere, and had his great quilted coat on ; but his face had fallen, or been eaten off, and his naked skull stared out like the hermit’s of the wood of Joppa (in the “Castle of Otranto”). Kites and adjutants, larger than the Calcutta ones, were feeding on the bodies, and dogs were feasting in some places, and in others howling all over the

plain. I saw a black dog tearing, in a furious way, great pieces of flesh from a dead man, looking fiercely, and not regarding me. I thought the group horrible and sublime. At last I began to feel a good deal of horror—awful, but not unpleasant—when by way of adding to the sublimity the evening gun fired, and to my surprise I heard a ball whistle over my head. This, I suppose, was some neglect of the artillerymen. The General says he has certain accounts of Sindia and the Berar Raja having separated. This may be only temporary, or it may be for the purpose of attacking the Bengal provinces in two places; but the late defeat, the death of Jadoo Rao, and the bad news from all quarters, make it likely that they have broken up.’

‘Camp at Paloor, 13 miles south of Adjunttee, October 9, 1803.

‘Dear Strachey,—In answer to the Colonel’s questions (I now write from camp eighteen miles north of Aurungabad, Oct. 11)—1st. The Mysore and friendly Mahratta horse moved down on the left of the line of infantry, from the hill (from which the enemy’s camp was first seen) to the nulla, where they halted till the action was over, and then came and had a meeting with the General near Assye. They were quite out of the cannonade; but they had some fighting with some of the enemy’s numerous cavalry, and they lost a man. 2nd. Of the party of the enemy’s cavalry that came and halted opposite to ours in the beginning of the action, a part went off from their position opposite ours to Bokerdun, with Sindia and the Berar Raja, and the rest came down (on our left, I believe), and looked on at the battle. 3rd. The enemy’s cavalry camp was between the rivers, about half a mile nearer us than the infantry camp. The only wounded prisoner who gave any information that I heard of was a fellow who told Blair, of the Nizam’s detachment, that when Sindia discovered that our army was coming on him, he said to his chief that this was only the “*parunch pultun walla*,”⁵ that he would leave the beating of

⁵ The man with the five regiments.

him to his officers, and when he met the "*burra lushkur*"⁶ he would "*sauf kurro*"⁷ it in person. This is probably a lie of the wounded man's. No prisoners were taken. The sound men ran away. Our wounded were so numerous as to require the whole attention of our people. Some officers picked up and took care of wounded men. Major Huddleston, for instance, had several. I know scarcely any anecdotes of the battle, except that two officers are vehemently accused of skulking in a *nulla*. One of them, who had a sort of staff situation, said he was part of the day with his regiment, which his regiment denies, and part with the General, which he and all head-quarter folk deny. The General: "No, by God, he is none of my child." It need not be mentioned, either, that the two youngest regiments of cavalry, having never been before in action, did not behave well at all. They skulked in the *nulla*, and their officers lost them and charged with the 19th and 4th. Major Huddleston is said to have been seen riding about, calling, "Where is my regiment? Has anybody seen my regiment?" It must be observed that he was where he ought to have been, and where he would have seen his regiment if it had behaved as well as he. I have already written all I know about Europeans, with the story of Grant and *Serle*. All say Grant behaved in the most dashing style imaginable, rushing into the thickest of the enemy by himself and laying about him. I do not hear of any "*suwari pesh andazy*"⁸ of the enemy's but one, who lounged his horse about near the 74th, and every now and then dashed forward and killed a European. He was at last shot in the *nulla* by the cavalry. I will write you anecdotes hereafter as they occur to me. I shall not say how proud I was when I read your praise of my account; but you must take notice that it is the very interesting occasion, and not anything in the account, which makes you relish it. I am very glad you got Adam's letter. Your letter has not yet reached me; but there is a dawк missing, and as missing dawкs have hitherto always made their appearance at last, this will also, no doubt. I

⁶ Great army.⁷ Make it clean, i.e. a clean sweep.⁸ Dashing forward, skirmisher.

should be sorry to lose your verses. What I said about your Spenser verses set me considering all imitations of Spenser, who is reckoned the easiest imitated of all our poets. I think, in the best imitation, all you can say is that you know what they are meant for, by the verse and the sprinkling of old words, as one knows Charles Fox in caricatures by his black mazzard, but that there is no farther resemblance to Spenser. One of Spenser's characteristics no other poet could ever imitate: I mean the harmony and majesty of some of his verses. He is in this respect very unequal; but I will undertake to collect a vast number of heroic verses out of the "Fairy Queen" which you will not match out of all the rest of our poets, including Dryden and Pope. I have said enough to tire you, and to bring me under the satire on those who "like no language but the 'Fairy Queen.'" . . .⁹ was quite right to refuse H.; besides that, it is wrong ever to recommend people for offices which imply domestication and *humtaumee*.¹ The General would certainly have refused. He is, you know, a remarkably conscientious man, and has no idea of letting private favour interfere at all with public duty; and as I at present exercise the laborious duties of M. I.,² I can assure you that it is not the busiest of four divisions of duty which, all put together, make up an agreeable sinecure. You may guess how necessary an M. I. is. My duties are: intelligence, which takes me an hour a day at most; Persian I. two hours a week; M. I. four hours a week; and Interpreter of all tongues, which takes me an hour a week, and is my most troublesome appointment. I do not mean that I am impudent; but knowing that I must interpret, whether well or ill, and not having much anxiety about my reputation as a Hindustanee, I interpret quite coolly, and have the use of all my senses and all my language. But my stock of Hindi is really too small. I cannot readily understand all that is said to me, much less say all that I ought to express. I mean in talking to Mahrattas, which is my common employment. I even find a difficulty

⁹ Erased in the original.

¹ Having meals together.

² Mahratta Interpreter.

with Deckanee Mussulmans. Their words, their song, and their phrases are so different from the Hindustani of Gilchrist, that he is of no use to me. It was quite a pleasure to have to interpret once for a man from Delhi, although he spoke horrid nonsense. Of the Intelligence Department: a number of your observations will be answered by this one—that I have not the control of the Intelligence Department, but only the charge of ten parts out of thirty-four. I think well of all your remarks: of some because they had, and of others because they had not, occurred to me before. I thought of sending fakeers, but found the plan so well known that officers used to send fakeers to head quarters on suspicion. The advantage of sepoys is that you can depend on them, and that you may pick a man whose character you know. I should not have this advantage, even if I could get sepoys, or if ours understood Mahrattas. The horseman plan would be good; but it would make us liable to much imposition, and would be difficult to accomplish with such wretched instruments as our hircarras, perhaps not quite fair. I think, if anyone in this line were to apply, he might improve the intelligence; but I had some people given me, and a way shown me, and so fell into the habit of jogtrottery, the great foe of improvement. This was the more natural, as the present plan answered very well for getting notice of the place where the enemy were. To have carried anything further, as their councils or debates, plans, &c., it would require Major Malcolm and 100 Brahmin caurpauris, and 10,000 rupees a day for bribes.’

‘Eighteen miles from Aurungabad, near Poolmurry,

‘October 14, 1803.

‘Dear Strachey,—I have received your letter of October 8, and approve of your plan. Answer:

‘First, of Business. I am much obliged to the Colonel for the hircarras, and infinitely obliged to you for the Cicero. I am now (I wish to God it would last), smit with the love of justice and the law of nations as a study, not for practice. Of the latter, I am sorry to say that I am never very much smit

with a passion for acting justly. I have almost done with Vattel, and was very anxious to get Cicero. I wish I could get the instructive books I wrote for, Burlamacchi, Montesquieu, &c. It is so seldom one is in a humour for reading what it is every man's duty to study. I am afraid my present dispositions will not last.

'Second. The field did, as you say, make a strong impression on me, and I thought of it after I went to bed, when it seemed more horrid than it had done before. There have been a number (five or six) of sudden deaths of servants, &c., in camp since the 23rd, and the natives all say it was owing to their having gone to see the dead ; that, being unaccustomed to such sights, they had "*hybut kaia*"³ and died of it. I have kept a journal since September 1, and write down (when I can and am not lazy) any things I have seen immediately, and I sometimes look it over for things to write about, and sometimes write out of it to you. The account you mention was written in it with all haste the moment I came home, while I was dressing for dinner. The same of the battle, except that I corrected my journal account. More of this afterwards. I do not observe that my journal improves me, though a journal must improve one, being a daily exercise in describing what one sees, or what one thinks, with a certainty that the description will never be seen by a stranger. Do you ever write journals now ? do you ever end a day, "It is better to die than live thus ?" Third. To the Colonel's question. We are going to watch Sindia, and prevent his getting down into the Nizam's country, while Stevenson carries the war into the enemy's country. This is the present plan, I believe. Our sick and wounded are in the tolerably good fort of Nizamabad, or Adjunttee, with three companies. They have excellent accommodation.

'October 15.—Montesquieu, &c., are come. "You are the prince of good fellows and king of auld men." Joking apart you are very good indeed ; but we must not abuse the King's post, particularly when the army gets nearer the enemy, and

³ Died of fright ; lit. 'eaten fear.'

the Pindarrees make it desirable that the dawks should be small. The story of the piquets was this. The General seeing Assye on the right full of infantry, conceived it to be a post of the enemy; as it was, ordered . . . who commanded the piquets, to keep as far from it as he could; instead of which . . . kept close to it, and so separated from the line which was purposely kept to the left to admit his keeping far from Assye (as well as for another purpose, which I will afterwards try to explain). This mistake brought the 74th into the first line, and they and the piquets got into the heat of the fire of the infantry and guns posted near Assye. Had they kept in their place, the General says, the party at Assye would have given way of course, when the rest were beat, half of our men would have been saved, and the cavalry, not having been obliged to charge to save the 74th, would have been fresh and able to have led Gocla, &c., to pursue the enemy, and complete the victory. I cannot tell you certainly about our guns. We had not more than fourteen. The first, forming two brigades, 12-pounders, I believe, were immediately left behind, and all the others stopped sooner or later before the line got very far on. I heard the General say we did not fire more than a hundred rounds. Our guns did nothing; all was done with the bayonet and the sword. . . .

‘I will tell you three things of the General to fill up. He says of . . . , “I do not blame the man; he did what he could; but from habits of dissipation and idleness he has become incapable of giving attention to an order to find out its meaning.” He said one morning that “so-and-so would have happened if we had been beat, and then I should just have made a gallows of my ridge-pole and hanged myself.” The General, finding your “*Selecta Græca*” on my table, took them up and read the Greek part for some minutes, while I was doing something for him. He also talked of the construction of the Latin tongue. I wonder if he is a classical scholar.

‘Your, &c.,

‘M. ELPHINSTONE.’

‘Camp at Firdapoor, October 18, 1803.

‘. . . We marched down the Adjunttee Ghaut this morning. It is neither rough, nor, for a ghaut, steep, but it is narrow. At the top of it is a gate, with a wall on one side, and a high bank and precipice on the other. After you get through to the gate the road lies along the face of a steep hill, and on the other side the aforesaid precipice. For some distance from the gate there is a wall to prevent people falling over the precipice. Between the wall and the hill there is room for a camel, a horse, and a bullock, to go abreast. We found Colonel Laing at the bottom of the ghaut, and breakfasted with him. The General is unwell; he has a bad cold, a sore throat, and a slight fever. . . .

‘There is a report that Colonel Stevenson is in possession of Burhanpoor. Sindia’s infantry are said to have plundered it for two days and then gone north. S. and B. are at Paloras between the Casseewarry Ghaut and Burhanpoor. I fancy our motions will depend on theirs. Col. S. will probably besiege Asseerghur. (Secret.) S. has made some indirect proposals through Ballajee Coonjie and one Mahommed Meer Khan for a negotiation, not direct for a peace, and latterly apparently sincerely through Collins’ news-writer; and letters have passed through Laing’s camp for Moheeput Ram and the General, which perhaps contained some direct overtures. They are carried by a person who is, I think, the news-writer. They are gone to Stevenson’s camp because Moheeput Ram’s letter was to be delivered first. You know the way in native negotiations. *Parturiunt montes*, &c. But perhaps the situation of S. may bring him to negotiate without trifling. I doubt if it will end well; I mean I think it will end in nothing. The General is an excellent man to have a peace to make. I would pick him out of all India for it, if, on long acquaintance, I thought of him as I do now; I would give him Malcolm for a talking confederate. I think he seems a sensible, moderate, unprejudiced man, and unprejudiced on subjects where you would least expect to find him so. I had a long talk with him about such a one; he said he was a very sensible man,

but that he was very slow; that opportunities went by before he really understood them. He laughs at talking of the Peshwa's and Nizam's governments as governments; their ministers as you would ministers in Europe. I repelled this argument. I pointed out the injustice: while all the time you are showing the injustice of the proceedings of the master, the minister is thinking of nothing but what a bore it is to be sent there to be scolded. I am afraid to form good opinions of people hastily now. I am growing old; but I like what I have seen of the General very much. You never write me about the office. How goes on the log book? I wish you would write me some news from your diary and correspondence. Lutwedge begs you will not forget his copy of B. G. Did I write you a long time ago that I had heard the General talking about B. G.⁴ without knowing who was the translator, or perfectly (it appeared to me) understanding the subject? You are beginning "*te tollere humo victorque virum volitare per ora.*" *Vale!*'

'Camp at Firdapoor, October 22, 1803.

'Dear Strachey,—I cannot think how I happened not to mention the very great pleasure I had in hearing that all the British subjects had come off in so honourable a manner from Sindia's service. I am particularly glad that Stuart is safe in person, and sound in character. The resignations of the British subjects, and their being accepted, showed principle and foresight, on both sides, which make each more respectable. I did happen to see Stuart's account, but you must not imagine that I see all papers. No paper comes within my department. The General sometimes talks to me about the news, and sometimes sends for papers, and shows me them, but I see very few papers, which is rather a bore. I come now to your letter, one part of which returns to a subject which has given me some uneasiness, and which now gives me something more than uneasiness—I mean the failure of intelligence. I have not applied myself, as I ought, to the improvement and perfecting my part of it. Considering how little else I have to think of, I

⁴ Bija Ganita

ought to have given up my whole time to that part of my duty, when something remained to do. I believe the General would attend to anything moderate and reasonable that I might recommend. I have not been always certain that he would like plans from me who have only one branch, and that not the first; but one branch is under a native who has a thousand things to occupy him, so that it is particularly my duty to look after the intelligence. I now think that there are many improvable things in our system. I shall think a good deal about it, and then talk to the General.

‘Now to answer your letter.

‘Thanks for your sending Dr. B.’s convoy. I tremble for the great jurist. Conceive his falling into the lawless hands of Pindarrees. I wish to God he was in English. Between German prolixity and French language, he will take me longer than English patience will last. I fancy all terms of philosophy, &c., are the same in French as in English. If so, I shall get on swimmingly. I shall consume my two seers⁵ of wax candles over him and Cicero. I have already spoken of the part of your letter to which I now come in order—*i.e.* intelligence. I am rather ashamed and angry with my own character, but I will not despond, being determined to come *to good*. I continue to flourish in the studies of inglorious ease, but I must now transplant myself to the still more inglorious studies of espionage.’

‘Camp at Firdapoor, October 23, 1803.

‘I thought a good deal about espionage and *foorsut yafteh*.⁶ I spoke to the General, who said this was the best way possible. He assured me that we must now and then go without intelligence, but that, on the whole, the plan was good. I said, “But it may be improved, so that we shall always have intelligence. Suppose we had more men, and them from the country (or Burhanpoor, so as to know the country), and suppose they were paid differently, and in proportion to their speed.” He only attended to the last part and said, “That, indeed, might do

⁵ A seer is about two pounds weight.

⁶ Finding an opportunity.

good." He said he had written to Colonel Close for good, tried, assured men. In the meantime, I intend to think of a hircarra's progress from the time he sets out till he returns, and to interrogate the hircarras by themselves, and by these two operations to discover the difficulties, then to think what sort of men are fit to get through them. In the meantime I have sent my naic into the villages to persuade people of this neighbourhood to try a trip, and I shall make experiments on all sorts of men.

'Yours,

'M. ELPHINSTONE.'

'Camp at Deotanna, November 15.

'Here is a camp day. General at half-past four. Tent-pins rattle, and I rise and dress while they are striking my tent. Go to the front, and to the Quartermaster-General's tent, and drink a cup of tea. Talk with the *état-major*, who collect there till it grows light. The assembly beats and the General comes out. We go to his breakfast table in front of his tent and breakfast; talk all the time. It is bitter cold, and we have our greatcoats on. At half after six, or earlier, or later, mount and ride, or, when there is no hunt, we do not mind one another. The General generally rides on the dusty flank, and so nobody stays with him. Now we always join Colonel Wallace, and have such coursing a mile or so out on the flank, and when we get to our ground from ten to twelve we all sit, if our chairs have come up, or lie on the ground. The General mostly lies down. When the tent is pitched we move in, and he lies on the carpet, and we all talk, &c., till breakfast is ready. Then we breakfast off fried mutton, mutton chops, curries, &c., and from eleven to two get to our tents, and I arrange my hircarras, write my journals, read Puffendorf, Lysias, and write you and Adam, and sometimes translate, and sometimes talk politics and other privities with the General; and then at two or three I eat a loaf and drink two glasses of port and water; and when it grows dark, unless I am writing, as I am now, I get shaved and walk about head-quarters line till it is pitch dark, and then dress, go to dinner, and we all talk about the march, &c., and they

about their former wars, and about this war, and Indian Courts, and politics, &c. At nine we break up, and the Quartermaster-General and Major of Brigade and I hold a committee and settle whether we march next day, and then I go to palankeen. All this is extremely pleasant. I have enjoyed, I mean relished, society, and study, and business, and action, and adventure, all according to their several natures. Ever since I got well, which I attribute to having lived according to reason, I have been very moral, considerate, industrious, and have lived according to Cicero and Puff; but I think I perceive that “Nunc in Aristippi furtim precepta relabor.” It is, however, *furtim*, and I shall endeavour to keep steady. All this stuff will give you a notion how I pass my time. I forgot to say that when we halt we have large companies at breakfast and dinner, and that on those days I lay a-bed till half after seven, and talk with gents till ten, and then I play all day. *Vale!*

‘M. E.’

CHAPTER IV.

GAWILGHUR, 1803.

ARGAUM—VISIT TO THE FIELD—PREPARATIONS FOR THE SIEGE—RECON-
NOITRING WITH THE GENERAL—VISITS TO THE TRENCHES—JOINS THE
ASSAULTING COLUMN—CAPTURE OF THE PLACE.

THERE is a gap in the file of letters to which I am indebted for this part of my narrative. The next in the series is dated December 11, nearly a month after the last quoted, and written when the combined forces of Wellesley and Stevenson were engaged in the siege of Gawilghur, a powerful stronghold of the Berar Raja, the fall of which terminated the war. Fortunately the journal which Mr. Elphinstone kept during these later operations has been preserved. The narrative is so clear that it must be a matter of great regret that we have not the whole story of this interesting chapter in his life written in the same lucid style.

Mr. Elphinstone, in after life, was fond of reverting to these stirring events. His respect for his chief had a tinge of the enthusiasm of youth, which made him impatient of any slighting remarks. The only occasion on which I ever saw him ruffled was on my quoting a passage (I think from Napier's history), in which a rather invidious comparison is drawn between the military genius of Wellington and that of Napoleon. Mr. Elphinstone has described to me the General Wellesley of those days as being at times almost boyish in his manner; then, as ever, attaching the first importance to the supplies of his army, and never more excited than when, on one occasion, he received intelligence of the interception of a convoy. He added, what was less to be expected, that he was very sensitive to what was said of him at head-quarters. Of

his anxiety to anticipate criticism we have a well-known instance in his letter to Sir Thomas Munro, vindicating his attack on the enemy at Assye without waiting for the intended junction with Stevenson's forces. 'Had I retreated before them,' he said at his own table, 'I should have been at once surrounded by their numerous cavalry, and must have hung myself to their ridge-poles.' This anecdote was repeated to me by Mr. Elphinstone.

'He was serene on the field of battle.' In illustration of this Mr. Elphinstone told me that when the enemy's guns opened fire at Assye he allowed his secretary, who was riding near him, to put questions suggested by mere curiosity: 'Do you call this a hot fire?' 'Well! they are making a great noise,' was the reply, 'but I do not see any one hit.' At the next great battle, Mr. Elphinstone was again at the side of the General when the cannonade commenced, and this time rather unexpectedly, and with such effect that the advancing troops were thrown into some confusion. The General rode towards the enemy's line with a blank look. After a while he pulled up, and, turning to his young secretary, 'There will be time,' he said, 'to take those guns before night.'¹

More than two months intervened between Assye and Argaum, and during the greater part of that time the army of Wellesley remained inactive or moved from point to point to baffle the attempts of the Mahratta cavalry to make a dash into the territories of the Peshwa or the Nizam. The General's despatches abound with complaints of the deplorable state of the country he had to defend. On October 8, a fortnight after Assye, he writes from Adjunttee, where he had established a post, and placed many of his wounded:—

¹ The incident is referred to in the General's letter to Major Shawe after the action. 'If we had had daylight an hour more, not a man would have escaped. We should have had that time if my native infantry had not been panic-struck, and got into confusion, when the cannonade commenced. What do you think of nearly three entire battalions, who behaved so admirably at Assye, being broken and running off when the cannonade commenced at Argaum, which was not to be compared to that at Assye. Luckily, I happened to be at no great distance, and was able to rally them and re-establish the battle.'—*Wellington's Despatches*, letter of December 2, 1803.

‘Our allies are deplorably weak on every point; and as we depend for our supplies on the security of the countries south of the Godavery, it will not answer even to risk that security by throwing my whole force forward in an offensive operation against Burhanpoor and Asseerghur; I therefore propose to return to the southward myself, and to send Colonel Stevenson forward upon the Taptee. If our allies were in any degree of strength, a movement of our whole force upon Asseerghur, and then upon Gawilghur and Nagpoor, would put an end to the war; but under the present circumstances I must be satisfied with something less brilliant.’

From Adjunttee he fell back to the neighbourhood of Aungabad, in pursuance of his defensive plans, as the enemy threatened to penetrate the range both to the west and east; and the rest of the month of October was occupied with marches and counter-marches, during which they were tantalised at times by the sight of the enemy’s encampment, which moved away whenever an attempt was made to attack it.

‘It is unpleasant,’ he writes to Colonel Stevenson on October 28, ‘that we cannot take all the advantage I could wish of our success; but the fact is that offensive operations are not expected of us in this quarter, and although I am willing, and have undertaken them already, I must take care not to risk, by attempting too much, that for which I am sent here, and the failure of the service expected of me—viz. the defence of the Nizam’s and Peshwa’s territories besides, &c.’

In the meantime Stevenson, whose force had pushed forward beyond the Taptee, had entered Burhanpoor, and captured the important fortress of Asseerghur, which offered only a show of resistance; while Lake was winning victory after victory on the plains of Hindustan. A large portion of the regular troops in Sindia’s army had been withdrawn, to meet the pressing dangers in the North; and after the reverse at Laswarree on November 1, that chief made overtures for peace, and an armistice was concluded with General Wellesley, under which he engaged to separate his forces from those of his ally; upon which the British General pushed northward to join Stevenson,

and struck a final blow at the forces that still rallied round the Raja of Berar.

The journal commences abruptly in the midst of the engagement. Mr. Elphinstone had now the opportunity, which he missed when at Assye, of witnessing and joining a charge of cavalry:—

‘. . . The balls knocked up the dust under our horses’ feet. I had no narrow escapes this time, and I felt quite unconcerned, never winced, nor cared how near the shot came about the worst time; and all the time I was at pains to see how the people looked, and every gentleman seemed at ease as much as if he were riding a hunting. The opening of our guns had great effect in encouraging our people. . . . was shot in passing the village of Argaum. In the charge the Dragoons used their swords for some time, and then drew their pistols. If one cut at a horseman, he would throw himself from his horse The next man would or cut him down.’²

The remainder of the page is much torn. It appears from the fragments that his horse carried him more than once into the midst of the enemy, who made no effort to cut at him.

‘I stopped to load my pistols. I saw nobody afterwards but people on foot, whom I did not think it proper to touch. Indeed, there is nothing very gallant in attacking routed and terrified horse, who have not presence of mind either to run or fight. I hear one man rode between Serle and Captain Fortman, and pretended to be eager for cutting up the enemy. When a little ahead of them he pushed on. He stuck, however, in a hedge, and was put to the sword. I remember thinking, while riding and pursuing through a dark and, where one could not see the next man, that I might be mistaken [for a deserter from the] colour of my clothes; for, but it did not happen’³

The next fragment opens with a new date.

² The spaces left blank are torn off in the original.

³ The words between brackets are torn in the original. He was warned of the same danger when he afterwards joined the storming column at Gawilghur.

' Visit to the Field.

'30th.—I rose at seven, and rode to the head-quarters of our division. I walked about and heard the news. After breakfast I went with a party to the field of battle. Our dead had been removed about the village, and there was little worthy of observation on the ground between the village and the place where the two lines engaged. I noticed that the old building near the tree, where we all stood at first, was much battered. From the village we went to the left of the enemy's line. There were some guns, some dead, and one young man wounded in the thigh and lying under a gun. I got some villagers to carry him to my tent. He turned out to be a fine young man, a Brahmin.⁴ He was in Beni Sing's regular infantry, which, he said, consisted of 7,000 men. He was once servant to Cherry, at Lucknow. I rode along the enemy's line with Blakeston and Johnson. We counted twenty-nine guns, three of which were of iron. In one part of the line, where the 74th and 78th charged, the ground is covered with dead. They are all Mussulmans, dressed in blue. They have long beards and fine countenances. There are many old men among them. Three of the group are almost as fair as the fairest Europeans, except in the parts exposed to the sun. They say this party was called the Farsi Risaleh. Others say they were Arabs. There are three or four hundred of these fellows lying close to one another. To the right, where the wounded man was, the ground was covered with Bengal sepoys' caps. From there we went to the place where the cavalry charged. We rode through the field and up the garden. We did not see so many dead as we expected, but there were a great many, some with terrible wounds: three or four with their heads cut off and carried away. On our way back to where the charge began we saw another European. The whole four were dressed exactly like natives, and two, probably all, were circumcised. From this

⁴ Foot-note by Mr Elphinstone: 'This was Jhow Lal, who remained in my service till I left India.' Subsequent note: 'This ought to be Tola Ram. Jhow Lal was his brother.'

we galloped home. It is said that Sindia's troops were on the right, and that none of them were engaged except Gopal Rao's party. They had some fighting with Salaubut Khan's people, and one party of Sindia's horse charged one of our battalions, and was beaten off.'

The operations of the besieging army are described somewhat minutely in the journal from which the preceding extract is given. The fortress stands on a spur of the range which divides the waters of the Taptee from those of the Poorna, and at an elevation of 3,500 feet, being upwards of twenty miles north-east of Argaum, while Ellichpoor, on which the British army advanced after the battle, lies some twelve miles to the south-east of Gawilghur. The most vulnerable point lay to the north. The plan of attack was arranged between the Generals at Ellichpoor; and Stevenson's force, which was better equipped for the siege, advanced in this direction, while an attempt was made by the army of Wellesley to breach the wall on the south, near the Peerputty Gate. It was, however, impossible to bring the heaviest guns into position, owing to the difficulty of the ground, while the brass 12-pounders produced very little effect. Johnson, the officer of Engineers whose name is mentioned in the preceding letters, was at one time for escalading.

The surrounding scenery, as described in the journal, is very romantic, and it became necessary at places to make a road by which the army could advance. I subjoin the account of the early operations in a letter to his friend Strachey.

‘Camp before Gawilghur, December 11, 1803.

‘Do not read this aloud, but select parts for news when you have read it. The particular account of our reconnoitring is very well between us two, but would be ridiculous to a stranger.

‘Dear Strachey,—I have received your scolding letter. I accounted for my not writing up to November 30. Since then we made two very long marches; one short one, with a ride into Ellichpoor, a visit to Salaubut Khan in the morning, and

a nautch and dinner with him in the evening; one halting day, visits of Nizam's sirdars, the interest of establishing posts in one march, and reconnoitring one day, more reconnoitring till two each day, one march and vakeels from Sindia and the Boslah in the evenings, and yesterday one whole day's work getting through the hills and reconnoitring the north face of the fort, and coming back to-day took me till two, and I am writing at three. Add visits from Gocla, Amrut Rao's vakeel, Appa Dessye, Moheeput Ram, and translations, and my old journal, and a book of conferences which I keep, and you will forgive my not writing. I wished to have written a particular account of the battle of Argaum, but I find if I do that I shall not be able to write you about what is now going on. So I will begin with Gawilghur. From Argaum to Ellichpoor is a very rich plain; to the north of Argaum is a range of not very high hills; in this range to the east of Argaum is the fort of Narnalla; twenty miles further east the range gets low, and Gawilghur appears over it with perhaps another range between. Gawilghur is part of a very high range, but is higher than the rest, and detached from the range on all points except the north. The other faces are very steep, and the rock is scarped in many places. The works are built round the top of the hill, which is flattish. There are no works below. The fort has three gates, one in the south face with a road leading to it up a promontory, or root of the hill (or nick, or nose, or whatever it is called). It has another gate to the west, or north-west, which I have not seen, and which I understand has been built up, and another to the north. The approach to the north is over moderately waving ground, and on that side the fort is no stronger than if it stood on a plain. But this good ground is not to be got at without crossing the range of hills on which the fort stands. I hope this description will enable you to understand the operations, which I shall now describe. On the 6th, in the morning, two battalions were detached from the army, then lying near Ellichpoor. One, the 1st of the 2nd, under Colonel Chalmers, was sent to take possession of a place below the

Peerputty Gate, and the other, the 1st of the 6th, under Captain Maitland, to a village called Damungaon, seven or eight miles to the east of the fort, and at the foot of the hills, over which there is a road at that place. The 2nd marched first; they reached the hill, drove in a party of the enemy, and took possession of a very small village called Waury, where they established a post. Both the post and the position taken by the battalion were in full sight of the fort; the latter was at the distance of two miles. They were fired on all day and night by an 18-pounder and some other guns, and the people at the post were sniped at. The snipers wounded five sepoy, and little Osborne, whom you recollect, slightly. The other battalion, the 1st of the 6th, drove the enemy out of Damungaon without loss. Damungaon is an open village, built round a mud fort, with a ditch, loopholes, and some swivels in it. They found the road over the hills impassable for guns, but they advanced parties over the first range, which is not very high, but rather steep. Next morning the army moved from Ellichpoor. Our division marched five miles nearer the fort, and the General rode on to reconnoitre. We passed Damungaon, and got over the first range of hills to a place about two miles from Damungaon. The pioneers had done a good deal for the road, so that we rode up it. Beyond is a deep rocky ravine, and beyond it a small plain, and then high hills, in which Beni Sing is said to be with such of the infantry as escaped Argaum. As we returned we met Captain Maitland's battalion, and one brigade of Colonel Stevenson's, with him at its head, going to encamp beyond the rocky ravine which we had left. The General having heard that there might be an attack made by the south, or Peerputty gate, went on the 8th to reconnoitre. We passed through bad road and jungle, and got to the place where the battalion was. The 18-pounders fired now and then, and the shot fell sometimes short of the troops, and sometimes beyond them. We passed on and got to Waury, then went up the hill on to a landing-place, which the General thought 700 yards from the foot. Another person thought it 1,000 or 1,200; I can't guess. We stood there

about three-quarters of an hour, and the enemy seeing us, fired at us with a 6- and a 3-pounder and gingals. Two artillery officers, Noble and Beauman, went on to another landing-place, and declared it a fit place for a battery, and undertook to breach from it with two iron 12-pounders. By the time we were coming away the enemy got the range of the place so well, that they hit a hut by which we were standing, and dusted the last gentleman who left the place. When the General got back to the battalion (which was now the 1st of the 3rd) he ordered them into a sheltered place, which we had picked out on the way up, and ordered an advanced party to the highest landing-place, where there was good cover. We got home by two. The echo at this ground was favourable to the sound of the guns, which made a deep rolling noise like thunder. The fort put me in mind of—

“Horrificis juxta tonat *Ætna* ruinis,
Interdumque atram prorumpit ad *æthera* nubem.”

Next day, the 9th, Colonel Stevenson advanced seven miles into the hills, and Captain Johnson (Frissell's friend), a brave, active, intelligent fellow, but in Frissell's half-informed positive style (and I believe his model), got within 800 yards of the west gate, which he found open, and discovered a place within 300 yards of the fort, from whence it might be breached. There was water, materials, cover, and everything that could be wished, not excepting a fine view of the inside of the fort. Yesterday the General went round to the north side.⁵ . . .

. ‘*December 10.*—Got out at seven to see the north side of the fort. We first rode to Damungaon, where we first met Colonel Kenny and others. Some of them went with us up the first ascent. There is a good custom of beating drums and playing the “Grenadiers’ March,” while the sepoys are dragging the guns up ghauts. After passing the tree where we were before, we had to cross a very deep and abrupt valley, which

⁵ The account of the reconnoitring which follows is taken from the journal. The account in the letter being very short.

seems to me as bad a place for guns as can be. After passing it and some more bad road where an iron 12-pounder was sticking in a corner, we got to Colonel Maclean's tents, where we stopped awhile. I met several old friends, among whom was Blair. We then passed on and got into a narrow valley, where the road was infamous, but the place shady and pretty. Here we found an iron 12-pounder sticking. It had got into such a position, that if it moved forward the nave of the wheel came against a tree. The people, however, put stones under the wheel, so that when the sepoys gave a general pull the bullocks moved forward, and the elephant pushed, the wheel rose over the stones and the carriage leant to the other side, so that the nave was clear of the tree. I could not have thought the getting a gun over a stone was so interesting. After this we pushed our way among guns on a bad road, sometimes mounted, sometimes on foot. At last we turned to the left, up the side of a steep hill. The shouts of the people working in the valley and the whole of the scene was romantic. We got up a steep hill and saw the rich plains of the lower country; then we passed a ridge, and below us to the left was a deep rocky valley surrounded with precipices, and without any apparent opening. We went through much wild and picturesque country till we got to a beautiful valley, where Stevenson's head-quarters' line and a brigade were encamped; we went on up and down some steep places and overtook Colonel Haliburton and the rear-guard of his brigade. After getting up a very steep place, we went over rather steep swells of ground for a mile or more; we saw the earthen part of the fort as we advanced. At last we met Colonel Stevenson. He had his troopers and three companies of sepoys with him. There was pretty steep rising ground between us and the fort, behind which we were quite concealed. We dismounted, and ascended the rising ground, where from behind some stones the whole north side of the fort suddenly appeared. There was something of surprise and grandeur in this. The wall with battlements, the fort with tents, mosques, and other buildings, all burst on our view at once. Between the fort and us on the

right some houses were burning, and some of the enemy, who had set them on fire, were still there. They were very near; we had not time to look carefully at the fort. I did not like to look long for fear of drawing a fire on the General. It did not appear distinctly whether there was a chasm or interruption between us and the fort; we therefore went to the right, leaving a few sepoy to stop two roads which led from the fort to our rear. The sepoy lay in cover, and sent up one or two of them wrapt in cumlees⁶ to lie behind stones and look out. We went on horseback in cover, and got to a place where a rivulet ran through the hillocks which were between us and the fort. There we dismounted, and issued out through the bed of the nulla on the plain where the burning houses stood. The General was satisfied that there was no interruption. Johnson wanted him to go further, but he refused, quite properly, for a hundred men might have taken him prisoner, even where he was. The enemy's party, who had been on the left, were now on our right, and very near us, so near that we could not easily distinguish our own look-out sepoy from theirs; and we heard them call out, among other things, "Aou ray" ("Come on, you there"). One fellow came very close, Johnson said, to have a shot, but he did not fire. Johnson tried to take him prisoner, but failed. In going off the General rode to rising ground to take a look at the fort, and all his troops rode after him. We thought it would draw a fire, but did not. As we went off the fort began firing, but without effect. . . .

'December 10.—Dined with Colonel Haliburton, and drank sangaree with Barclay, and then went to sleep. It is terribly cold in these valleys, but I had clothing enough, and slept very comfortably. Ten of the 9th have got fevers. They slept without tents. They and Johnson fared on the beef of such bullocks as they could catch.'

'The place must be ours by the 1st. I forgot to say that the 1st of 2nd was sent yesterday to occupy the road to the third

⁶ Blankets.

gate. We have had the detail of Cassaully (*sic*).⁷ Lake is a glorious old fellow. All people here praise his letter extremely. I was struck with it at first, because the compliments to the killed are well brought in, but everybody says he understands it. I do not! do you? Write me which campaign you think most of, ours or his. Perhaps his is the most brilliant; but if any one considers the difficulties occasioned by distance from home, difficulty of supplies, narrow resources, and insecure rear, doubtful allies, and an enemy well provided with cavalry and headed by chiefs, I think he will allow most merit to our General. I have matter and inclination for more, but I have neither time, power, nor impudence enough to go on.

‘Yours ever,

‘M. E.’

‘The people of this fort are inactive, contemptible fellows. If they had defended these hills we should scarce have taken them without great loss. If they had fired or sortied they might have killed or taken both General Wellesley and Colonel Stevenson, and if they fired or rocketed Colonel Haliburton’s camp they might kill many people.’

On the following day the General’s party returned to their own camp, where they found a vakeel from the Berar Raja. The interview lasted several hours, but led to nothing. Another attempt at negotiation is referred to with a similar result. ‘The Berar Raja’s vakeel came. I always laugh at conferences, particularly with the Berar vakeel. I am sensible of the indecency, and try all I can to prevent it.’ This is all that is said. On the military operations he enters very fully. On the 12th he writes:—‘The batteries are to be constructed to-night, and to open to-morrow morning. The General expects to storm on both sides to-morrow at two, or, at farthest, the next morning at daybreak. A third party (of Chalmers and his battalion) are to push up to the third gate and to

⁷ The battle of Laswaree we fought on November 1. The force under General Lake advanced from *Keromlee*, and made a forced march to the place where the battle was fought.

force the wicket. A party of 250 Europeans and 980 natives, besides officers commanding and non-commissioned, are to march at four for the trenches, where Colonel Wallace commands. The fort has fired a good deal to-day on both sides. Wrote some journal. Walked about and looked at the fort. Dined. A party. Loaded my pistols; went to bed prepared to storm in the morning, and dreamed of the batteries. Before I went to bed I saw flashes like musketry all round the works.

'*December* 13.—Woke before daylight. Soon after, I thought I heard Colonel Stevenson open. I was surprised that our batteries did not open. After I was dressed a large wild hog dashed through the lines, overturning several of the paymaster's guards. I ran for my pistols. Cunningham and Campbell ran after the boar on foot, and Bellingham got his horse and galloped after him. We breakfasted, and set off for the trenches, so called, although there is no trench. Still our batteries did not open. When we came near the fort we met some officers of the 2nd, and they told us it was found quite impracticable to get the iron 12-pounders up to the batteries, but the brass 12-pounders would soon open. While we were there we certainly heard Colonel Stevenson's battery firing. Till this the fort had been firing smartly, indeed all the morning; but as we heard Colonel Stevenson's guns they quitted this face entirely. We rode on, dismounted before we came to Baurý. The road has been changed and is now dreadfully steep. We passed the iron 12-pounders, which are lying covered with boughs. After getting up the ascent the General gave up all thoughts of getting them up. When we got near the battery, we found the Europeans making a road. The battery is a poor miserable bundle of fascines, is scarce so high as a man, and looks more like a fold for sheep than anything else. This is reckoned a strong good battery, but ugly. After we had stood some time the General ordered the 12-pounders to be drawn in with as little noise as possible. This was done, and fortunately the fort did not fire at the Europeans, who were exposed all the time. All seemed rejoiced when the first gun got in, and, when they began to fire, all were elated.

A long time after the report the ball whistled through the air, and struck the wall with a crash, and dust rose in quantities. After they had fired some time, we came away. While we were there the battery caught fire, which gave some alarm. The General ordered everybody out of the battery, except those absolutely necessary, saying the enemy would redouble their fire if they saw the battery burning. Water was got, and it was soon extinguished. We rode home. At dinner Colonel Wallace came in. He had been sent for. The General told him that Colonel Stevenson had breached one wall, and expected to breach another this evening, or in the course of an hour or two's firing to-morrow; that he wished that, when Colonel Stevenson stormed, we should make a show on this side, to distract the enemy's attention. He therefore wished the troops to move forward in front of the battery, and to cover themselves behind rocks and hills as they could, till the gate should be opened; that he should send Colonel Chalmers to the third, or Delhi gate, and that he had requested Colonel Stevenson, as soon as he got in, to send a party to open each gate. Noble came; he said the carriages of the brass 12-pounders were gone, and that the wall was somewhat affected by our shot, so that stones fell out sometimes, and that Beauman intended to throw some shells during the night.'

'Before Gawilghur, 6th

'*December* 14.—Rose at six, expecting the General to go to the trenches; he did not go. The fort was so silent this morning that it was thought they were capitulating; but while we were at breakfast they were observed to fire. I stood till ten talking with Noble and others. Colonel Stevenson is firing loudly and often on the other side. Translated a paper about Arnaut Khan's sirdars. The storm is to be to-morrow at ten, and I have got leave to go round and be present. I was prevented setting off till after two. I got a note to carry to the first stage of the horse tapul,^s and the General desired me to

^s Dawk or post.

tell Colonel Stevenson that he should be ready by ten next day. He gave me two of his orderlies, and Barclay gave me four Mysore horse; I set off and rode hard to Colonel Stevenson's camp. I saw nothing remarkable on the road but the body of a man under a tree. I thought he had been hanged. There is now a company at each of the places where formerly was a brigade; and Colonel Stevenson is encamped above the last steep. His camp is irregularly pitched in little deep valleys, where there is good cover. The enemy nevertheless throw shots into his line, and have killed some people. I rode first to headquarters. Colonel Stevenson was in the trenches. I then went to Dowse, whom I found ill. I invited myself to dine with him, and he made me over to Kennedy. I then rode towards the trenches. I dismounted in cover and walked on past Labauda, over rising ground and entirely exposed to the fort, which was quite silent. I found Colonel Stevenson in a battery, and delivered my message; he received me very civilly, and sent to ask me to dinner, but I was engaged. He had a five-gun battery of two iron 18-pounders and three 12-pounders, a battery of two brass 12-pounders, and two howitzers (these two were erected in part of the night of the 12th), a two-gun battery of brass 12-pounders, which was constructed since twelve to-day. His iron guns give a great report, and the balls rattle against the wall, and raise clouds of dust. While I was in the battery Captain Dickson walked out towards the breach; he walked so far that Captain Colebrooke took him for one of the enemy, and called for a rifle to shoot him. Captain Dickson walked on till he was out of sight from the battery. I went out a good way from the battery with Johnson and Colebrooke to see the breach and the road to it. Both were very satisfactory. The gates and walls of this part of the fort are very confused: two walls are distinct; one of them rises in towers high over the other, which has also towers. There is one wide breach in the lower wall and two in the upper; the largest to the right of the breach, and the smallest beyond a tower to the left of the breach. Two gates at least are visible—one large one with towers and a smaller, the largest furthest in. The outer gate

looks so like a common bastion that I did not observe it till the evening of the 15th. While we were reconnoitring, some snipers fired at us. Several shots, sounding dully, came near us. There was no gun fired on this side the fort, and these are said to be General Wellesley's shot come over. We heard several muskets fired at Captain Dickson, and at last a complete volley; he nevertheless walked coolly back in safety to the battery. I believe a shot or two was fired before we came away. I walked back with Colebrooke and Mr. Ramsford, of the Cavalry, who dined with General W. to-day. I went to Kennedy's; dined very comfortably with him and Captain Goldsworthy, and slept in my palankeen. After my first sleep I woke; a gun was advanced in the evening and in front of the battery, which fired grape into the breach every twenty minutes all night. There was a good deal of firing from single muskets. Kennedy's horse was picketed under the fly, and stamped and made a noise, and a dog in the tent barked. I thought of Scudamour in the "House of Care."⁹

‘ Before Gawilghur, 7th.

‘ *December 15.*—I got up and walked to a hill above the battery, where I joined Kennedy. We walked on, joined Colonel Maclean, and went down to the right of the fort, looking from our battery, and saw the steepness of the rock on that side. A gun opened that enfiladed our battery. We met Johnson, of the Engineers, and I put him in mind that I was to go with him. He said he was to go with Colonel Kenny and the advance. I said, “Very well.” As we were returning to the tent we learned that the fort had thrown up a flag of truce, and had offered to comply with Colonel Stevenson's terms, whatever they might

⁹ *Fairy Queen*, B. iv. c. v. :—

‘ And evermore when he to sleep did think,
The hammer's sound his senses did molest;
And evermore when he began to winke,
The bellows' noise disturbed his quiet rest,
Nor suffered sleepe to settle in his breast.
And all the night the dogs did bark and howle
About the house, at sent (scent) of stranger guest,
And now the crowing cocke, and now the owle,
Loud shrieking, him afflicted to the very sowle.’

be. We saw a little white flag near the breach, and we saw many officers going down to the breach. We heard people talking of Colonel Stevenson sending in troops immediately. I confided in the irresolution of the natives, particularly as I knew Colonel Stevenson was limited with regard to time. I hear that Engineer Johnson went to the foot of the breach, and that the enemy asked for a suspension, and promised to send out a person to negotiate in an hour; that Johnson (who is a very humane man) urged them to make haste, and pointed out the certainty of the destruction of the garrison if they held out. At last they said if we would stop they would; and if not, they were prepared. This I learned afterwards. At the time all I knew was that the batteries recommenced with great fury. I breakfasted with Kennedy, and talked about Hafiz, Saadi, Horace, and Anacreon. At nine I left him, and went to the trenches. A deep, well-sheltered ravine or valley winds from Labauda to the batteries; in it the troops were lying. I went to the battery, and saw many people I knew. I went to Colonel Stevenson; he told me the latter part of the conference with the enemy; he had guns drawn out of the batteries to bear on the heights in the terreplein of the fort; he told me the use. He asked me if I meant to meet General Wellesley in the fort, or to ride round with the news. I said, "To meet him in the fort." In looking for Johnson I met Mr. Maclean, of the 9th, who remembered me at college. I did not him; but afterwards in the fort he put me in mind of drinking tea with him in a square near Bristo Street in Edinburgh. I remembered that it was there that I met the Irish student, whom I have often thought of since, who had a dispute with somebody about the comparative elasticity of steel and iron, in which he said he made "a great *bastè* of his antagonist." The gun that enfiladed the battery killed four and wounded two men in the trenches at a shot this morning. I learnt the plan to be this: Colonel Kenny to command the storming party, and to push for the Peerputty Gate; Desse to command the left attack; Laing another attack, I believe. The idea of the fort then was, that behind the three breaches there was a third wall, breached by age, but on a steep

place ; that after getting over it there was no obstacle but that beyond the heights, which we saw was a valley, in which was Beni Sing and his party. It was thought that we should form on the heights, and not break into parties till we had beat the enemy. Colonel Kenny and Colonel Desse were sitting in the battery. I went up to Colonel Kenny, said I heard he was to lead the storming party, and that if he would allow me, I would be of his party. He bowed and agreed. Soon after Colonel Stevenson asked Colonel Kenny if he was ready. Colonel Kenny said "Yes." He was ordered to advance. We drew our swords, stuck pistols in our belts or handkerchiefs tied round our middle, and passing in rear of the batteries, marched on to the breach. Colonel Kenny led the whole ; with him went Winfield, Johnson (who had got an unfortunate Potail to go with him), and myself, and perhaps Lutwidge and an officer of the 94th. Then followed the 94th Regiment. Our advance was silent, deliberate, and even solemn. Everybody expected the place to be well defended. As we got near we saw a number of people running on the rampart, near the breach. Colonel Kenny said they were manning the works. I asked him if they were not flying? He said, "No! no! they won't fly yet awhile." We went and got close to the works, to a wide hedge, where Johnson had been during the night. I was amazed that they did not fire ; our cannon fired over our heads. We got to the breach, where we halted, and let the forlorn hope, a sergeant's party, run up ; then we followed, ran along, and dashed up the second breach and huzzaed. Perhaps the enemy fired a little from some huts by the second breach. I did not see them do so. I saw some of them bayoneted there. We kept to the right after entering the second breach, and soon after the troops poured in, so that there was no distinguishing forlorn hope or anything. Colonel Kenny knocked up, and Johnson and I lost him. I had been frequently told, particularly in the trenches just before advancing, that I should be taken for a European of the enemy's, from my not having regimentals. I thought little of this after leaving the trenches ; but in this confusion, losing Johnson, I told Winfield what I apprehended, and stuck to him. I after did

the same to Lutwidge. Going on to the right, we came to a valley leading to the Cool Derwazeh,¹ down which the enemy were crowding in their flight. . . .’

Here the narrative breaks off abruptly, but the sequel is told in the following letter to his friend Strachey:—

‘Camp near Ellichpoo, December 18, 1803.

‘Not for the Profane.

‘Dear Strachey,—I have had so little time to write you that I am forced to have recourse to a small hand to enable me to pay my debt to you without running into debt at the post office. When I wrote you last (except my short letter) I was just setting off for Colonel Stevenson’s camp. I got there by five, and went to the batteries. I also went forward with Johnson, the Engineer, to see the breach well, and to reconnoitre the road to it. Colonel Stevenson’s batteries are only 150 yards from the wall. When a gun fires you hear the ball whiz along; then it cracks against the wall, and raises a cloud of dust. Besides the two batteries I mentioned before, he had raised a third battery of two brass 12-pounders. The guns at the fort were almost silenced, but they sniped a good deal. The breaches were practicable. There is a wide breach in the first wall. There are two good breaches in a higher wall behind. The wall is at a distance of a few yards (three or four). The breach was easy enough to get at, but the stones rolled down on those behind. I have anticipated. I dined with Kennedy and Goldsworthy, and slept in Kennedy’s tent. In the morning I walked about and saw the place. A new gun was opened, which killed four and wounded two people in the batteries at a shot. While I was going away the enemy held out a flag of truce. Johnson, Engineer, went and talked to them. They wanted a truce for an hour, *after* which they would send out a man to negotiate. This was half-past eight, and the attack on all sides was to be at ten, and a letter to Gen. W. had to go

¹ Back gate, postern.

eighteen miles. Johnson, who is a very humane man, tried to get them to do something in earnest, but they said if we would stop they would; if not, they were prepared to fight. We who saw a practicable breach could not account for their obstinacy, but expected a most resolute defence. I went to breakfast and returned.'

Here follows a description of the advance of the storming party, which is more fully told in the preceding extract from his journal. The narrative proceeds:—

'We huzzaed and dashed up the second breach, and leaped down into the place. Such of the enemy as stood were put to the bayonet; but most of them ran off to the right, and down a narrow valley which led to a gate. Here they met Colonel Chalmers's coming on with half the 78th (he had been sent round by the General to attack this gate). The 94th pressed behind, firing from above, and a terrible slaughter took place. After this we endeavoured to push on, when to our astonishment we discovered that we had only gained a separate hill, and that the fort lay behind a deep valley, beyond which appeared a double wall and strong gates. "Ibi omnis effusus labor;" the troops halted, and the officers endeavoured to form them. I was at this time with Johnson and Lutwidge, having lost Colonel Kenny in the confusion, after getting over the second breach. I thought we should have to entrench ourselves, and wait till guns would be brought up to breach the inner walls. But Colonel Kenny, almost alone, had run straight on to the gate, where he was now perceived. The Europeans found the road down, and crowded after him. The first wall joined to a steep hill, and the Europeans began slowly and with difficulty to climb up one by one. Beyond the first wall was a narrow, rocky road, overtopped by a steep rock, and another wall and gate, over which those who climbed the first wall would have to go, which the steepness and height of the wall made impossible. While the Europeans were clambering over, the enemy kept up a fire from their works; in the meantime our people poured in at the breach, and covered the hill opposite to the enemy. They fired on the enemy, and

the valley was filled with such a roar of musketry as can hardly be conceived. The sight cannot be described. At last our men got over, and opened the first gate. Scaling-ladders were brought, got up the hill, and applied to the second wall. The enemy fled from their works; we rushed over the wall, and the fort was ours. I forgot to mention that at the first breach all ran where they liked, without order; it was the same here. Johnson and I endeavoured to collect a party to push for the gate, where General Wellesley's division was; this was easy; the officers were all obliging, and every man you spoke to joined you, and a prisoner was taken who knew the way. But here began the difficulty. Every step there was something to lead away your people; the enemy, the plunder, water, or some strange sight stopped us on every side. We picked up new parties, and pushed on till the Killadar's house stopped even ourselves. In front of it lay a European, wounded in the body; his head lay over a bolster, almost severed from his body. All around us, everywhere alike, lay dead and dying, and on one side was an officer calling out for volunteers to hang the Killadar. I saved him by the argument that he knew where the treasure was, and made him over to Colonel Laing. He was to carry him to the treasury and post a guard over it, but the man made his escape, and was afterwards killed. At last we got to the Peerputty Gate, and I saw our division close below from a bastion. They were let in; the 78th colours were placed where the Bosla's used to be with huzzas; and soon after the union was hoisted in the highest part of the fort. The General came in, and we went and looked for treasure. I do not believe there is much. The number of our killed and wounded is 53 Europeans and 100 sepoys, or thereabouts. That of the enemy is immense. They are fine, handsome, tall Hindustanees. Beni Sing, their commander, is among the slain. As I have told you my feelings before, I will do so now. When I had obtained leave to go over 21, 43, 78, 88, 116, 98, 15—like a 32, 31, 86, 118, 18, 88. I use your own cypher. This ceased when I set off, and did not return. When we went on to the breach, I thought I was going to a great danger; but my mind

was so made up to it, that I did not care for anything. The party going to the storm put me in mind of the eighth and ninth verses of the third book of Homer:—

οἱ δ' ἄρ' ἴσαν σιγῇ μένεα πνέοντες Ἀχαιοὶ,
ἐν θυμῷ μεμαῶτες ἀλεξέμεν ἀλλήλοισιν.

“The Greeks went in silence, breathing strength,
Resolved in their heart to support one another.”

And after one gets over the breach one is too busy and animated to think of anything but how to get on. So much for Gawilghur.² Next day Major Malcolm came, and that day passed in negotiation, and the night in copying the treaty. The moonshees wrote in my tent, and I woke every now and then and looked over them. Next morning Major M. talked to me about the Nagpoor secretaryship. I said I should like to

² Before leaving the subject of Gawilghur, it may as well be mentioned that for his services on this occasion Mr. Elphinstone received a share of the prize-money. The fact is mentioned in a letter from the General, which has an additional interest in showing the confidence he placed in the judgment and discretion of his secretary. It was addressed to Mr. Elphinstone the following year, when he was at Nagpoor. In penning the paragraph relating to Monson's retreat General Wellesley must have had in his mind his own position when he encountered the allied Mahratta forces at Assye.—

‘My dear Sir,—I enclose an extract of a letter from the Secretary to Government in the Military Department conveying the approbation of the Governor-General to the measure of giving you Captain's prize-money and gratuity. You will accordingly draw the one from the prize agents, and the other from the paymaster of my division of the army. Write to Bellingham and he will settle both for you.

‘You will have heard of Colonel Monson's retreat, defeats, disgraces, and disasters. He is, however, at last arrived at Agra, he and his detachment, woful examples of the risk to be incurred by advancing too far without competent supplies, and of the danger of attempting to retreat before such an army as Holkar's is. He would have done much better to attack Holkar at once, and he would probably have put an end to the war. At all events, he might have made a better retreat. This is between ourselves, as I am very unwilling to circulate my opinion of the late transactions to the northward. I only hope that they will not induce our late enemies to break out again.

‘I think you will do well to mention Monson's retreat to Ramchunder, apprising him that it was a small detachment which had been pushed too far from support. . . .

‘Believe me, &c.,

‘ARTHUR WELLESLEY.’

stay with the army; he said somebody must go before Webbe can come. I said I would; he hinted that he would; I said I should be extremely glad to go with him. You know he talks diffusely and indistinctly, but this was al Ghurruz.³ Afterwards the General told me he must get me to go to one or both of these fellows, S. and B.,⁴ and wished me to pitch on the best for me with respect to prospect of a Residency. I said I should like to go where there was most to do, and look afterwards for a place when all was settled. I have had more talk about this; Major M. and the General both recommend Nagpoor for speedy succession. I am almost ashamed to tell you my objection to it. I begin to wish for idleness, society, and ladies; and I dread being stationed long at a place where I shall be so solitary. Conceive what society there will be where people speak what they don't think in Moors. Of course I like being sent now. What I dread is my reward, a Residency, and a secretaryship in the meantime. You will see that much of this letter is for you only, even the news part; the details to any one else would seem ridiculous, and the egotism disgusting. There are some things in this which I almost tremble to commit to paper and the post. I shall know more about my fate soon. If I go to N., when in this world shall we three meet again? Pray come to N. on your way to Calcutta, and see the famous Jos. W. I wonder how this will end? One might study and live happily and philosophically in a small society; but that never is the case at a Residency. Gross people nautch and brutify, and others grumble and Ahirmanise.⁵ I think it will end in my not getting even the secretaryship for an age, or at least getting it in some way which will bring me malcontent to Bengal. By that time your claims will in the course of nature have sunk to a Zillah Reyship, and we may be at the same station or live in the big house at Russa out of employ. Before I finish this letter, the connection of which would puzzle Forlorn, I have to notice how very kind Major M. has been to me since first I saw him;

³ The design (upshot).

⁴ Sindia and Bosla.

⁵ Ahirman (Ahriman) is the personification of evil in the system of Zoroaster.

and, above all, how much I am obliged to him for getting me sent for to Nuggur.⁶ Pray write; if I owe you letters you may depend on being paid hereafter in melancholy epistles from Nagpoor.

‘Yours,

‘M. ELPHINSTONE.’

⁶ Nuggur—Ahmednuggur, when he joined the army on Malcolm’s recommendation.

CHAPTER V.

NAGPOOR, 1803-1807.

THE COURT OF NAGPOOR—CEREMONIAL—THE RAJA THREATENS RENEWAL OF THE WAR—CORRESPONDENCE WITH STRACHEY—READING—INCURSIONS OF PINDARREES—FALCONER'S HALL—TYRTÆUS, THUCYDIDES, AND THE PELOPONNESIAN WAR—RECEIVES LEAVE OF ABSENCE—JENKINS—TIGER HUNT—JOURNEY TO CALCUTTA.

MR. ELPHINSTONE was little more than twenty-four years of age when he received this mark of the confidence placed in him by his chief. The appointment was intended for Mr. Webbe, a public servant on the Madras establishment of some standing, and Mr. Elphinstone at first was appointed to the temporary charge of our relations with the Mahratta Court as Secretary to the Residency. It will be seen from his journal, from which I subjoin some extracts, that General Wellesley was very anxious to secure for him some permanent appointment, and nothing could be more considerate than his treatment of his young secretary. He was asked to make his own selection of officers to accompany him, and to choose between the two appointments that were open that which was likely to be permanent. I subjoin the emphatic terms in which he was recommended to the Governor-General:—

‘Upon the occasion of mentioning Mr. Elphinstone, it is but justice to that gentleman to inform your Excellency that I have received the greatest assistance from him since he has been with me. He is well versed in the language, has experience and a knowledge of the Mahratta powers, and their relation with each other and with the British Government and its allies. He has been present in all the actions which have been fought in this quarter during the war, and at all the sieges. He is acquainted with every transaction that has taken place,

and with my sentiments upon all subjects. I therefore take the liberty of recommending him to your Excellency.’¹

Still more emphatic was the testimony he bore to his secretary’s soldierly qualities, when he told him, on the close of the campaign, that he had mistaken his profession, and ought to have been a soldier.

The Sovereign to whose Court Mr. Elphinstone was accredited, and at which he resided upwards of four years, was the descendant of one of the lieutenants of the great Sivajee. The Bosla family pushed the Mahratta conquests in Central India, and, in the middle of the last century, had formed a State which extended from the Nerbudda to the Godavery, and from the Adjunta to the Bay of Bengal, and thence commenced a series of raids into Bengal, and was thus brought into collision with the rising British Power. Both Clive and Hastings cultivated friendly relations with this State, which stood somewhat aloof from the politics of Poona, and maintained a neutrality very favourable to the British Government. Raghojee, who succeeded in 1788, had considerable abilities, and had, in the early part of his reign, extended his dominions on the Nerbudda; but, feeble in energy and destitute of any military talents, he endeavoured to pursue a trimming policy, and avoid committing himself with any of the neighbouring powers.

After the Treaty of Bassein the war party acquired an ascendancy in the Court, and the Raja allied himself with Sindia; but when, by the events of the war, he was deprived of his best provinces, he bitterly repented having abandoned the temporising policy of his family, and remained for the rest of his reign in a state of sullen discontent, hostile to the British Government, whose overtures for a subsidiary treaty (in Lord Wellesley’s phraseology, a defensive alliance) he steadily rejected, while his territories were overrun by the hordes of Pindarrees, which rose to importance on the ruins of the Mahratta States.

Mr. Elphinstone received his instructions from General Wellesley on December 24, the day after the ratification of the

¹ Wellington Despatches, vol. ii. 595.

treaty of peace reached the British camp. They enjoined him in general terms to endeavour to convince the Raja of the sincere desire of the British Government to draw more closely the alliance between the two Governments, should the Raja make any proposition to that effect. Above all, he was called upon to see that the articles of peace were carried into execution. Anticipating delays on the part of the Raja's Aumildars and Sirdars in withdrawing from the ceded territories, Mr. Elphinstone was enjoined, in the strongest manner, to require the Raja to give into his hands written orders, addressed to the persons complained of, to warn them of General Wellesley's determination to retaliate any injury done to the territories ceded by the treaty.²

The task which now devolved on the new Resident was not attended with much difficulty at the outset. Parts of the Raja's territory were interwoven with that of the Nizam, the two Governments having joint rights to the revenue in one province, in a manner that seems strange to Europeans, but was not uncommon among the native States at that time. Claims were advanced by the Nizam to some territory east of the Wurda, and also by public servants of that Court, who asserted their rights over certain villages; all which matters called for especial investigation. The Raja appears to have acted in a straightforward way with regard to most of these questions, and Mr. Elphinstone's task was an easy one, except on one point; but the Court gave way after a firm assertion of the rights of the British Government by its young representative.

The hardest of his tasks remained when the letter of the treaty was fulfilled. The aim of the British Government, in insisting that a British representative should reside at the Court, was not merely to cultivate general relations of amity, but to provide against future ruptures. Mr. Elphinstone's instructions assumed that a Sovereign whose treachery was notorious, and whose sacrifices had been so great, might be induced

² Supplementary Despatches, vol. iv. 302.

to renew the war, in the hope of recovering part of what he had lost. The new secretary was therefore enjoined to be accurately informed of all that passed in the Durbar, particularly to watch the embassies of Sindia and Holkar, and at the same time obtain distinct information of the numbers and disposition of the Raja's troops. It will appear that this portion of Mr. Elphinstone's instructions caused him no little embarrassment. The information required could only be obtained through the ministers themselves; and to probe such sources of intelligence involved a course of intrigue that was repugnant to his nature. It is true that the way was prepared for him by the acts of some of the ministers themselves. Jeswunt Rao Ramchunder, the minister who had negotiated and signed the treaty of peace, was profuse in his offers of service; and General Wellesley recommended him to the Governor-General, and to the new envoy, as a useful channel of information. A suggestion was also made by the same authority that Jye Kishen Ram, who was the usual channel of communication with the Residency, might be employed for the same purpose.³ After all, in a Mahratta State, the difficulty was to procure intelligence that could be relied upon. When Mr. H. Colebrooke was at the same Court the centre of intrigue was Vincajee, the Raja's brother, and there were never wanting those who were ready to give their own versions of the disposition of the Court. There seems no reason to doubt that, during the six months that succeeded the war, the Raja remained steady to his resolve to avoid a new rupture; but when the war broke out again, and the attitude of Sindia became menacing, a state of things arose which cost the young envoy much anxiety.

* *Vide* Supplementary Despatches, iv. 328, 332. 'In answer to your letter of the 6th, I beg you will do whatever you think necessary to procure intelligence. If you think that Jye Kishen Ram will procure it for you or give it to you, promise to recommend him to the Governor-General, and write to his Excellency on the subject.' What was meant by such a recommendation is explained in a letter only a few days later in date. 'Before Ramchunder went away he offered his services. I recommend him to you. He appears a shrewd fellow, and he has certainly been employed by the Raja in his most important negotiations. I have recommended him to the Governor-General for a pension of 6,000 rupees a year. I think he will give you useful intelligence.'

Jeswunt Rao Holkar had steadily refused the overtures of Sindia and Raghojee to join the late confederacy. He had looked on with satisfaction at the progress of the war; but when his rivals were crushed, he took alarm, and resolved to strike a blow before the British Government should have established its authority in the newly conquered territory. During the progress of hostilities he had levied large contributions in Malwa; and the predatory bands who were at the call of any adventurer, and had lost their occupation by the peace, rallied round a prince who promised a new career of plunder. Jeswunt Rao was certainly a prince of considerable abilities and energy. He had fought his own battles with Sindia, and had a dash of the old Mahratta spirit.

The national conquests were won by rapid incursions, in which their numerous cavalry played a principal part. After the crushing defeats which the regular forces had experienced in the late war, the opinion gathered strength among these princes that the only mode of combating the rising power was by reverting to the old predatory system, and wearing out their adversaries by plundering their territory, and acting on the communications of their armies. Holkar is said to have openly proclaimed these views, and when he found himself at the head of a large force he assumed a menacing attitude, and made demands on the British Government which precipitated a collision.

I need not recount the events which followed. Lord Lake at first rather undervalued the strength of his adversary. After some trifling success on the opening of the campaign he sent the principal portion of his force into cantonments on the approach of the rains, and despatched a small force under Colonel Monson to penetrate into the heart of Holkar's possessions, in co-operation with a similar advance of a force from Guzerat. Monson's disastrous retreat, followed by the failure of four successive assaults on the second-rate fortress of Bhurt-poor, in presence of the Commander-in-chief, brought on a new crisis, and Sindia, who had resented the interpretation placed on the Treaty of Surjee Argenjaum, took advantage of our

reverses, made overtures of alliance with his old enemy and rival, and threatened a renewal of the war.

The crisis had now arrived which was provided for by General Wellesley's instructions to the newly appointed Resident. The war party again got the upper hand in the Court of Nagpoor, and Raghojee was gradually being sucked into the vortex. So open were the preparations for war that Mr. Elphinstone, after successive warnings, was obliged at length to take his leave and prepare for departure. These decisive steps had their effect, and peace was maintained.

I now revert to the materials afforded by Mr. Elphinstone's journals and letters to carry on my narrative of this portion of his career. It will be remembered that the account of the siege of Gawilghur closes abruptly during the crisis of the assault on the fortress. Some pages are lost, and when the story is resumed we find him in the midst of his preparations for his new duties. It opens in the middle of a conversation with Malcolm, who had rejoined the camp, and was in the thick of all the negotiations and arrangements which followed the treaties of peace.

‘He talked for some time indistinctly, and I said, “If you wish that I should go, of course I should like it extremely.” He said, “It may be necessary that both you and I should go.” I said, “If you think it of such importance as to go yourself, I should like nothing better than to go with you.” I did not find out what Major M. meant. He talked a good deal about the peace, &c. I breakfasted at his tent; afterwards he looked over the Persian of the treaty, which I had dictated as fast as it could be written, and which must be infamous. The Vakeel came, read and signed the treaty. He would not sign till after seven on account of unlucky hours. Afterwards we rode off. The General called on Moheeput Ram, then rode to Ellichpoor. On the way the General told me that he must get me to go to the Berar man when this peace was signed. He said people would be wanted to go to both him and Sindia, and that I might choose which I liked, with a view to the speediest succession to the chief situation. I said I should of course wish

to go where there was most to do in the meantime, and think of a place to stay at afterwards. He said that he knew that Mr. Webbe would not stay long at Nagpoor; and, on the other hand, Colonel Collins would never return; but then somebody would be sent in his room from Bengal. He thought that I might go first to one place, and then to the other. I believe I said nothing. We went to the hospital, which is a good and clean one, rode through the town, miserable and ruined, out of a handsome gate.

‘*December 18.*—I am still stiff with the business of Gawilghur. Translated. In the evening went with the General to an entertainment of Moheeput Ram’s.

‘*December 20.*—After breakfast the General spoke to me about preparing for my journey. He said he would send a surgeon, fifty sepoy, and any officer I liked, and fifty Mysore horse with me. I went to consult Malcolm about preparations. The General came and joined him. I had some talk about preparations, and some about business. I take the intelligence to be an important part of my business. The General was particular in recommending frequent intercourse with ministers, so that a visit from the English agents should not be so remarkable a thing as it is now. After that I went and proposed to Close to come with me. He hesitated, and we were interrupted by a summons to tiff. at Floyer’s. After tiffin Close said he should be glad to go.

‘*December 23.*—Anund Rao was shown the line, in the same manner that the Peshwa was. The line, after all it has done and gone through, looked very well, but it neither looked, nor did the troops march as they did at Poona. I felt no small regret that this was the last time I should see the line. I have been very happily situated since I joined the army. I like the people and the manner of life. It is impossible to serve under General Wellesley without feeling great regard and respect for him. Such impressions made my duty agreeable, and I shall ever remember with pleasure the time I spent with this army. Breakfasted; we had scarce done when people began to assemble to see the ratified treaty delivered. This was to have

taken place at twelve, but did not till much later. The treaty was delivered by Gunesh Punt, and a regal salute was fired. Soon after the General went to meet Wittul Punt, Sindia's Dewan. We rode out with officers and met him. He has a fine sowary. Gorepura came in front, and caused the General to be introduced to him. He entered camp under a salute, and went to head-quarters, attended by Moonshee Cavel Nine, Seddasheo Rao (a relation of Jedoo Rao's), and several other chiefs. Gorepura made himself quite at home; he was very gay and active on this occasion. Eitul Punt said it would be unlucky if he was still at the General's when the sun set, for that was Friday night. He sat, however, till gun-fire, teasing the General not to march to-morrow. After we went away the General went to visit Jeswunt Rao Ramchunder.'

On the following day, December 24, the newly appointed Resident received his instructions. Christmas Day was passed in preparations and in distributing Christmas-boxes. On the 28th he took leave of his friends, and was launched on his new career. On the 30th he approached the camp of the Raja, and the preparations for his reception cost him much thought.

'December 30.—I am going to send the moonshee to settle the time and manner of my interview. I have told him to learn how Colebrooke was received, and make that his model. I shall not be more particular about ceremonies than is absolutely necessary. If the Raja has the advantage in settling ceremonies, he will be soothed by it, and my rank, &c., is so little fixed, that nothing I do can be a precedent to bind Mr. Webbe, who comes from the Governor-General. The Berar horse are plundering all round. This village has lately been plundered and burnt, and they are now plundering one in the neighbourhood.

'The moonshee returned, and reported that he had been shown into a tent, where he waited a short time till the Berar Raja called him and talked to him. He inquired about me, what was my former employment, the number of my attendants, &c. He then sent two chobdars to show the moonshee a place to encamp at. He learnt from the head chobdar that

Colebrooke had given a nuzzur, and I recollect Rao Ramchunder told me that Colebrooke had worn the khillat. The Berar man said that to-morrow was an unlucky day. I thought a good deal about the nuzzur and dress, and determined to resist them as much as possible without making dispensing with them a point of honour.'

On the following day he was visited by two vakeels from the Nizam's villages, complaining that the Raja continued to oppress and plunder them. He assured them that after his introduction to the Raja he would take care that the Nizam's subjects were not oppressed. After more discussion about the ceremonial, which was prolonged in consequence of the moon-shee getting drunk one evening, the meeting was at last arranged.

They proceeded in state to the Raja's tent, and were received with the usual formalities; and after a speech on the part of Mr. E. conveying the satisfaction of the General at the conclusion of peace, and another from Sreedur Pundit assuring Mr. E., on the part of the Raja, that he entertained similar sentiments, they proceeded to converse on minor matters, the Raja asking when we eat and when we drank tea, what corps Close belonged to, what was the matter with Briggs, &c.

Two days later the Raja received him again in a less formal way. The attendants were dismissed with the exception of two or three favoured persons. The Raja had a little girl with him, apparently his daughter. The people stood outside at no great distance, while the servants went in and out with very little ceremony, and the people looked over the kurnauts.

He now became anxious about the intelligence department:—

'I do not get on well about intelligence. It appears to me indispensable to try every way to get it, because this man's character makes it probable he will conspire to involve us in another war. If we know of his machinations, I believe it possible to defeat them without force. If we do not, we must have a contest which will end in his ruin.

'Yet I do not like the ways in which intelligence is obtained. I hate anything that is secret and indirect, and

abhor to do what I should be unwilling to avow. If the Raja discovered that I was inquiring into the situation of his armies and the intrigues of his Court, what should I say? I should avow it, and tell him that he had once brought down a dangerous war on us in the middle of a profound peace, that afterwards we should want prudence and attention to the welfare of our country if we neglected to watch him.

‘*January 19.*—My intelligence does not go on well. I must take the hircarras into my own hands, for Murriappa is both stupid and careless. Nagoo Rao’s news is false in all the points on which I desire information. Can it be true on the others? Sundoo Rung (?) either knows nothing or will not communicate, and, to conclude, I have no sort of talents for intelligence. I was not successful with the army, and I am worse now; but perseverance overcomes everything. My great fault is want of boldness, and respecting too much the talents and integrity of the natives. I have little doubt that Jye Kishen Ram would be happy to tell his master’s secrets for money, even if his doing so were to injure the Raja. If I gave him money he would tell me false intelligence, but I should find some things out of it, and not be deceived, if I were careful. At all events, I must get more intimate with this person, and talk with him freely about news. Read some of Barbeyrac; walked far; dined.

“*Contrahe ventis nimium secundis
Turgida vela.*”

Interviews with one or other of the ministers were held almost daily, the subjects discussed relating chiefly to the evacuation of the ceded districts. Intelligence travelled slowly in those days, and the Court was alarmed at reports of the advance of British troops from Cuttack, threatening the province of Chutteesgurh. The Resident wrote to the officer commanding to inform him of the conclusion of the war, and to the General requesting him to do the same. A few days later the suspicions of the Court were again roused.

‘*January 24.*—About breakfast-time a note from Jye Kishen Ram to say we were not to march without mentioning whither

we go. We, of course, did nothing till a second note came, and told us we were to march to Booreebatty.'

In the meantime his health, which had been sustained during the activity and excitement of the campaign, began again to fail, and I meet with occasional notes of suffering and of consequent depression during his march, and again during the several years of his residence at Nagpoor. On January 15 there is the following entry:—'I have had sore eyes for these two or three days, with the usual pains. I have no time to study, and I am gradually falling into the horrid state in which I was at Poona. I must excite myself, I must read. If I cannot read, I must think, but I must not idle. Walked to the dogs and horses, as I do every evening.'

The concluding leaves of this fragmentary journal are much torn and defaced. The last page describes his arrival at Nagpoor:—

'Marched to Seetabuldee, a village near Nagpoor, encamped under a hill where there is an Eadgah. . . . Nagpoor is all in view from this hill. It looks very inconsiderable. The most striking feature is a large tank on this side of the town, with a small island on it. In the evening I went up the hill again. The Raja's camp is below. It is small, but it looked well; the frequent fires put me in mind of Homer's simile of the stars.'

Mr. Elphinstone kept up a very active correspondence with his friend Strachey during his residence at Nagpoor, and the file of letters of this period constitute the sole materials for my narrative of what passed during the following two years. At the close of the year 1805 he resumed his journal, and the materials for this biography are somewhat increased. It would be interesting could I present an account of the Raja and his Court by the same pen which afterwards painted so vividly the character and conduct of Bajee Rao, but I have failed in finding any trace of Mr. Elphinstone's own despatches of this period in the records of the India Office, and I must be content with such materials as are before me. The proceedings of the Court of Nagpoor at this time were of slight historical

importance. I insert a limited selection from the Strachey correspondence :—

‘Camp at Casnoor, January 12, 1804.

‘Dear Strachey,—I wrote you a short letter soon after I joined this camp. The people continue to be perfectly civil and compliant. The Raja generally marches every other day. We encamp a good way from him, and pass our time in *ferarughut temaum*.⁴ This Court is as plain as that of Poona. The Raja is an old, fat, black, mean fellow of fifty, very heavy-looking and sad in his appearance, but quiet and civil in his manners. Munna Baupoo is a young, good-looking man of thirty; he is lively and conversable. Sreedur Pundit is a tall, thin motsuddy of forty, speaks Persian, and is very modest and civil. Jymohen Rao is nephew to Eswunt Rao, the Berar Raja’s vakeel with the General. He comes to me every day, being a sort of Mehmandar, sneaking but civil. Sreedur Pundit and he have been here once in the ten days I have been in camp, and I go to the Raja’s and Sreedur’s this evening. I get on very well in consequence of the effects of our successes; but I do not succeed as I would wish in intelligence. Major Malcolm and I believe the General thinks that if this man is sincere he will immediately offer to have a subsidiary force, which the General, though he dislikes the system of subsidiary forces, thinks he should have. I think he will do nothing of the sort till something firm is settled about Holkar. I cannot write you all that has passed since I came; so I refer you to my letters to the General and to his Excellency the G.-G., which Bellingham will show you when you get to camp.

‘I like the uncertainty, variety, novelty, business, and importance of my present situation. I do not know whether I get on ill or well; but I get on without diffidence or perplexity. I wish I could manage better about intelligence. It is an employment for which I have no turn. Tell me the furthest a man may justly go to get intelligence. I think very far, when his only object is to see what plots are hatching against his country, and how he may stop them, and save one party

⁴ In perfect quiet.

from danger and another from "certain destruction. I am forced to be rather idle at present, but I shall soon resume Puffendorf. We are within sixty miles of Nagpoor, so I may soon expect quiet and a house—I can't say I wish for the latter. I will tell you a thing that happened yesterday. The potail of a village close to the Raja's camp applied to me for one English sepoy to protect his village from being plundered by his own Raja's army. I believe I am the only man in the camp that pays for anything, and, in consequence, I am forced to pay well. I paid yesterday 100 rs. The others just go on as Holkar's army used, plunder the fields and unroof the houses. From the river Wurda to this is a blank, stony, woody, barren country. The Raja's people say all his remaining country is the same.

'Write me often and long in prose and verse, and have compassion on me now that I am *door ooftadeh*.⁵

'Yours ever,

'M. ELPHINSTONE.'

'Nagpoor, May 1, 1804.

'Dear Strachey,—I have a great deal to do, but I have a headache that prevents my doing anything. I do not know what to think of your not writing. If you are ill you deserve to be pitied; if well—to be hung. As I have no letters to reply to I have little matter to write on. I recommended to Jeswunt Ramchunder that some freebooters who had laid waste, plundered, slaughtered, and destroyed should be punished. His answer is a mirror of slavish ideas and Hindustanee manners. It was that "he knew the English put people to death for such offences, but his Highness shudders at the name of an execution." Once when he had returned from a certain place a servant whose duty it was to wash the Raja's hands did it with scalding water. Every one was for putting him and the jemadar he was under to death, but the Raja forgave them both. Another time when he came to want water he found that through the neglect of a servant his *lota* (pot) was filled with ghee. The servant

⁵ *Lit* fallen far; an outcast.

was sent for; all called out to have him executed immediately, and Paundoorang, Bukshee's brother, was going to kill him on the spot; but the Raja said, "Let him go; it is easy to kill a man, but not so to make another." The comparing the crimes committed by these servants to robbery, murder, &c., the idea of putting the jemadar to death for the offence of the servant, the occasion, the scene of the other story, the ghee, the indignation of the courtiers, and the magnanimous speech of the Raja, form as exquisite an assemblage as man could imagine.'

'Nagpoor, June 13, 1804.

'Dear Strachey,—A month is not past since my prophecy, and behold our correspondence at a stand! You owe me two letters, you shall be punished by the shame of owing me a third. Here have been goings on at this Court. I grow impatient of this man's cool way of refusing to confirm the treaties with the Zemindars, of his refusal to make reparation for his underhand invasions of the Nizam's country (which I have proved), and of other conduct in the same spirit; and, indeed, I met with some cavalier treatment from these people, such as this. The Raja having equivocated and talked in a manner sometimes contradictory and sometimes unintelligible about the Zemindars of Sumbulpoor, I wrote to Sreedur Pundit to beg he would let me know in writing what were the Raja's intentions respecting Sumbulpoor. He sent a verbal answer in the same style with the Raja's speech. I again begged for a written answer. I received this reply: "As your present note is the same with your former one, to which I replied verbally through Jeswunt Rao (to-day I am at an entertainment in the Toolsee baugh, and to-morrow the Raja dines with Jeswunt Rao), I will on the day after to-morrow send you a verbal answer by Jeswunt Rao."

'This sort of treatment, which I have only experienced of late, I bore good-humouredly, only telling the Court it would turn out the worst plan, &c., till on the 10th in the morning I got orders from Lord W., written before he had received my accounts of the past behaviour, to deliver a strong remonstrance

in his name, and to declare his intention of renewing the war, if the list was not signed within twenty-four hours after the remonstrance was delivered. The consequence of this was the signing of the list, and the Raja now wants to have the indemnity offered at first, and which I fancy he thought to increase by holding out.

‘I should like to know about Gohud and Gwalior. It is ridiculous to ask you for an impartial account (for who ever heard of such a thing?), but one as impartial as you can I do ask for.

‘*Vive vaeque,*

‘M. ELPHINSTONE.’

‘Nagpoor, June 26, 1804.

‘Dear Strachey,

‘I have been reading Bertrand’s history of the French Revolution. What do you think of the first Assembly? I used to adore them, probably because they were fond of the parade of liberty, red caps, new flags, abolition of titles, big words, deputations of fiddlers received with respect, processions in honour of Voltaire, &c. &c.; also because they were fine uncompromising fellows, who did not leave a trace of what they found, who broke every chain that kept that monster man within bounds, and then, with a noble confidence in human virtue, thought to lead him with paper constitutions. I am amazed when I see people who had Montesquieu in their hands, with so little of the virtues indispensable in legislators, moderation and that prudence which carefully adapts everything new to what exists already, and which, when it cannot have the *best*, is content with the *best possible*. I used also to like the king. I now think him miserably weak, false, and dissembling (though I have just read his harangue). I used to admire Lafayette. I still like him, but do not think him better for the times he lived in. There were some respectable men on both sides, but the only person for whom I maintain my admiration is Mirabeau. I incline to believe him virtuous, and I see that he was a man of courage, genius, and energy.

When I say he was virtuous, I do not mean that he did not commit crimes, but that his virtues predominated. To tell the truth, I think all stormy times detestable, on one account, which is that pure virtue is useless in them. Common rules suit common times, and he is wisest and boldest who adheres to them longest; but there are seasons when a man must withdraw his eyes from them, and fix them on some few broad principles, which he should determine on before he enters the scene. A scrupulous man may keep out of troubles, and that is what I should do; but, if he engages in them, he must be "bloody bold and resolute." A man should shun a battle if he hesitates to shed the blood of his enemies, or to trample on the bodies of his friends. One thing which ought to make people detest and shun revolutions and unsettling of things fixed, is the certain ascendancy that wicked men acquire in them. I have given you an essay instead of a letter. Tell me whether you agree with me, and let me know what you think of the revolution. I do not think the French indebted to their representatives for anything. I think that the events of two reigns rendered a revolution unavoidable. The Assembly might have had the credit of directing it; but to piloting the nation they preferred removing the landmarks by which it might have steered. The issue is that the liberty of the world is in danger of annihilation.

‘By-the-bye, I never read Persian poets now, on account of my belief of their pernicious effects on the mind. You know I always maintained that they were the source of blue devils. In consequence of this and other things, thus far into the bosom of the rains have I lived on without melancholy. May you do the same all the year round. *Vale*.

‘MOUNTSTUART ELPHINSTONE.’

‘(Private.) Nagpoor, August 25, 1804.

‘Dear Strachey,—I enclose an imitation of three verses of an ode of Hafiz, ending in *haushee*, and two of *Khooshamud gool*. ‘I do not know how I have succeeded; if I have failed,

I shall not have lost more time and trouble than it took to write down "my unpremeditated lay." I have an idea of the extreme difficulty of translating Persian odes, owing to the difference of Persian taste from ours, and to the nature of the *ode*. All odes are difficult to translate; so much so that I have seen few good imitations of the ancients in that sort of writing, and no good translation. If you do not mean your ode to be the flattest and most insipid production in nature, you must aim at bold and happy expressions. These can scarce occur to any but an original writer; and when they are attempted without success, they produce either downright nonsense, or obscurity at least. For the truth of this I refer you to modern odes *passim*. Half of them it would pose a sphinx to unriddle, and the other half are so cold that even an ass's hoof would not hold them (*vide* Plutarch's "Life of Alexander"). Persian odes are particularly difficult. In translating from the ancients you may generally adopt the expression they use; but who could do that with "wash your leaves," or "think it plunder," or "I and the voice of the lives [or souls] sounding like the rose" (meaning "the musical voice of my mistress for me")? Besides, the Persians mingle gaiety, melancholy, piety, and sublime philosophy in a way that we could not relish; (what's worse, every third verse is so intrinsically bad that nothing can be made of it). Perhaps, if we read the Persian odes in the true spirit of the author, all the apparent incongruities might seem consistent and connected; but then, who of Englishmen would take pleasure in reading a Platonic poem, however well translated? Horace might—has, perhaps, connected gaiety and melancholy in one ode; but it requires consummate art to do it agreeably, and to prevent one clash of discordant feeling. How carelessly Hafiz does it! One needs but open the book to exemplify. In the first ode one verse is—

"Tinge the sacred carpet with wine," &c.

The next is—

"What ease have I in the resting-places of life, while the bell every instant summons me to depart?"

The next is perhaps the most magnificent verse in the whole collection :—

“The night is dark; how dreadful is the fear of the waves and of the whirlpool!” &c.

‘These are by no means such striking instances as I might have found if I had taken the pains to look for them. As I am mentioning this ode I will give you a curious parallel to its second verse :—“Keh eshk asaun numood,” &c.⁶ It is a pious song by Madame Guion, the founder of the Quietists, “L’amour pur et parfait va plus loin qu’on ne pense. On ne sait pas, lorsqu’il commence, tout ce qu’il doit coûter un jour.”

‘To return to the difference between Horace and Hafiz. Horace in his highest raptures writes like one inspired; Hafiz at all times like a drunken man. Bold expressions, rapid description, flashes of sublimity, and transitions which a sober man cannot comprehend, make the characteristics of his best productions. This reminds me of your excellent remarks on Hafiz and Saadi, from which you will observe I have borrowed a good deal in what I have said of the former. Saadi, as you say, is the greater genius of the two. Hafiz’s genius makes the widest excursions, but if it was hedged in by propriety, as much as the others, I doubt whether it would have filled as great a space. When I talk of propriety I mean in comparison with Persians. I do not know whether Meerza Nusseer (the Hukeem banshee) is not the Persian, of those I have read, who has most taste. I do not know about his genius. I suspect he is a close imitator of Jami. By-the-bye, Khyoom is a singular writer; his epigrams are far above any of those that I have read in Greek or Latin (which, by the way, are about a dozen). They are bold and very often profound thoughts in forcible language. To discuss the distinguishing characteristics of Jooeennee, Amvari, Khakanee, Rodoki, Gelaloodeen, &c., would exceed the bounds of a letter. I shall therefore return

⁶ The line completed runs as follows :—‘Keh eshk asaun numood awal waly aftad mushkilha’—‘For love appears easy at first, but difficulties supervene.’

to my poem; after what I have said of the difficulty it looks rather gay of me to try to translate Persian; but as I have only taken out of twenty verses the five which suited my purpose best, and as the composition is one of the easiest, it renders my remarks inapplicable to my own case. *Vale.*

‘M. E.’

‘Nagpoor, April 13, 1805

‘By-the-bye, you never seem to have received my letter about the troubles here in December, when the Raja had invaded Berar, and I had paid my visit of leave. If you got the letter I wonder you did not mention it. You never saw such hot water in your days (except in the Holkarian times); but all ended well. Lord W. said that, though convinced of the Raja’s intention to renew the war, he believed him to have lately dropped his intention; so everything went smooth, and I got a *κῦδος* for “energy and firmness.” I have since been employed on a subsidiary force, and failed utterly. Notwithstanding which Lord W. approved my conduct in a very full and handsome manner. I have much to say, but Nagoo Rao, who is just arrived from Gurry Mundela, has bored me till it is dark.’

The crisis referred to in the preceding letter occurred shortly after Monson’s retreat, when Sindia’s attitude became menacing, and the Raja of Berar threatened to take forcible possession of some of the territory ceded at the close of the war. The British Government, pressed in other quarters, accepted his excuses, and the storm blew over. It is curious that such a season should have been chosen to propose a subsidiary alliance. The account of this latter negotiation is given in some detail in a despatch from the Supreme Government in the following March, and it would appear that the overture came from the Raja’s minister, with the view, apparently, of removing the unfavourable impressions caused by his recent conduct, and with no serious intention of surrendering his

independence. It appears also from the same despatch that it was in contemplation to restore to the Raja some of the territory wrested from him in the late war, though the cession was not carried out till a twelvemonth later. Mr. Elphinstone was instructed, in pursuance of the conciliatory policy of the Government, to make overtures to the Raja on both these subjects; and the latter on receiving the announcement expressed his gratitude in animated terms, and the Resident was led to infer that his mind was greatly relieved by this communication. Mr. Elphinstone renewed the subject at an interview on the following day, and entered at some length on the proposed subsidiary alliance, taking pains to impress on the Raja the danger to which he would be exposed by the hordes of freebooters who would lose their occupation on the successful termination of the war with Holkar, and the inadequacy of his own forces to protect his territory. He concluded his address by contrasting the danger and embarrassment of such a position with the security and prosperity of those States that were connected with the British Government by defensive alliances. All this was frankly admitted by the Raja and his ministers, who endeavoured, in reply, both on this and on subsequent occasions, to sound the Resident as to the probability of receiving support from our Government in case of his being attacked, and without committing himself to a subsidiary force. It became now Mr. Elphinstone's duty to dispel these hopes, and to point out the unreasonableness of his expectation that the British armies would take the field and sustain a sovereign with whom we had no other connection than that which arose from the treaty of peace. The unhappy prince was not prepared to pay the price which was exacted from all sovereigns who recognised our supremacy, and the negotiation came to an end. It is only necessary to add, in the words of the despatch of which the above is a summary, that 'the Governor-General in Council considered the conduct of the Resident in the course of these discussions to have been distinguished by an extraordinary degree of ability and address.'

‘(Private.)

‘Camp, Coondalla, 30 miles W. of Nagpoor, April 24, 1805.

‘Dear Strachey,—Here I am in much the same situation that you were in when you last wrote me, exchanging gaiety which I have enjoyed during three months for solitude and gloom. I am thus far on my way escorting Colonel Close out of the Raja’s country. To-morrow or next day I turn back to Nagpoor. You, who are accustomed to large society, will not easily conceive how much we feel the prospect of a change from six people to three; but my letter will probably give you some idea of it before it is done, for I sit down to charge all my spleen on you.

‘I never saw the Colonel in higher blow than since he came here. He has two very good fellows with him (for the 3rd with the cavalry left us some time ago), and he kept up the spirit of the sporting to its height. I have got three brace and a half of European dogs, superior to any I ever saw. We have country dogs besides, have a fine sporting country, and are well mounted, and the Colonel besides had hawks. I had just got in supplies and a splendid set of tents, and we were so jolly and comfortable, when the order arrived for the Colonel to return south. Besides this, Sindia has many parties of recruits, &c., here. His treatment of Mr. Jenkins shows to what lengths he will go; and the frequent incursions of the Pindarrees, and his contempt for the Bosla’s government, keep us on the alert; so that Colonel Close always considered himself as encamped within sight of an enemy, and was vigilant accordingly. Now I shall be left with twenty odd men, which are scarce enough to do anything, and in consequence my whole dependence must be on the respect entertained by the enemy for the Raja’s independence. I have reason to think even he is wavering, and have to expect a return, with increase, of all the trouble and anxiety which I experienced towards the end of last year; nor will my prospects open till I get a regular escort from Bengal, and until something decisive is done in Hindustan.

‘M. E.’

‘Nagpoor, May 20, 1805.

‘Dear Strachey,—

‘The Raja has got a large army together, and probably is weak enough to imagine that he will be able to wait till a good opportunity offers of attacking us. I, having no such opinion of his judgment, was much afraid that if Lord Lake has no opportunity of striking a blow till the monsoon begins, this fellow will be up in arms before it is over. Though I am anxious for tranquillity, I must bring myself to wish for peace with Sindia, whose long dissimulation, and final perfidy, and, above all, his treachery, and barbarous conduct in plundering and detaining Jenkins, require the severest chastisement. If, as is most probable, he puts Jenkins to death, I think the war with him should never cease till he is hung. Nothing can be more admirable than the unsubdued spirit which Jenkins shows even in his despatches eight days after Holkar had joined.

‘Major Malcolm, who is gone to camp, will do admirably to conciliate Sindia, after he has been sufficiently punished; but as he is apt to take likings and attachments to natives, and seems to have one to Sindia, I hope he will not have to negotiate with him till he has lost 10,000 men and 150 guns.’

‘July 1805.

‘I cannot partake your joy at Lord Cornwallis’s being sent out. I do not think Lord Wellesley deserves to be superseded, and I tremble at the thoughts of change of measures which must bring all the Mahrattas on us. Lord Wellesley’s evident desire for peace has already had the most pernicious effects. If you want to conciliate the people, give them back their country. No other plan will succeed. If you keep it, you must fight for it. It appears to me that most mistakes in politics arise from an ignorance of the plain maxim and its corollaries, viz. it is impossible for the same thing to be and not to be. Hang the subject! it makes me sick.’

‘De Profundis, August 22, 1805.

‘Dear S.,—I write to tell you the strange news of this place. The Raja has lately received a Vakeel from Holcar. His brother has, within five months, sent one to the same person, and he has returned. Nana Sahib, who is almost the avowed enemy of our government and partisan of the enemy, is allowed to go to his chief town, Chanda. He went to-day. This is the more extraordinary as I have remonstrated lately against his levying a great number of troops in the country between Chanda and Burhampoor, some of whom lately plundered twenty-eight villages in our country. In the mean time the Raja’s brother loads me with civil messages, and at parting, and though we long since ceased to meet in public, proposes that we shall meet accidentally on horseback, to exchange how-d’ye’s and pass on. He also, to show his great civility, sends me certain greyhounds, viz. (1) one pup, that died mad this morning; (2) one dog of the coat and colour of a bear and nature of a jackass; (3) one dog without a tail—he might as well have sent one without a head; and (4) one very good bitch, all arrayed in cloth of gold. I suspect that old Raghojee, who dreads having his territories invaded, sends this youth off, that Holcar, relying on the known zeal of the latter, may think him (the R.) about to despatch a corps under his brother, and deceive us with a story of a quarrel. Perhaps old Raghojee actually means to do so. At all events, if he lets his brother fairly out of his hands, it will probably cost him half his country at least, the younger having long aimed at independence. So much for parish matters.

‘All my plans of removal of course end with Lord W.’s administration. My only objections to this place are its solitariness, which stunts the mind, and that I have been long here. The latter is my objection to every place of which it holds. All my *de Ponto’s* begin—

“*Tomitanæ jam non novus incola terræ.*”

That is one great (among others, immeasurable and immense) objection to India. God grant us both a good and (pray God)

a speedy deliverance, and soon! For when one is so desirous of despatch, even Alderman Curtis is not tautological.

‘(Private.) Nagpoor, September 18, 1805.

‘Dear Strachey,—Lord Cornwallis, I hear from good authority, is eager to purchase peace with cessions. It was a fine splendid period just before the failures at Bhurtpoor. I thought, and think still, that we had our enemies at our mercy, and that our glory was complete; but—

“Vertitur interea cœlum et ruit oceano nox.”

Instead of splendour and victory we are to have lessons and grumblings at the past. I know as well as anybody how fatal extensive conquests are to a constitution like ours, and think it might have been well if we had never been forced into wars here; but I cannot believe that it is possible to recede. If you restore all your conquests your enemies are stronger, but not less your enemies. Your generosity will only inflame their wounded pride, and give them a prospect of effacing their late disgraces.’

‘Nagpoor, September 27, 1805.

‘Dear Strachey,—

‘I wish to hurry over disputed points, but I cannot pass your observations, “I expect in answer from you pages of praise of Lord W.” I feel a conscious pride in my own superiority, and thus I reply with a sneer, “No, Mr. Strachey; every man is not God or devil with me, as with some folks.” I admit all you have said about gazettes, and most of the other things you have said; but am sorry that in that case you can only see one side of the question. In most cases you see two for my one of Lord Cornwallis. If you only see one side, yet it is for the best, and that which gives the truest idea of the man. I hear with pleasure of his plainness and English manners. He has all my good sense on his side, and what is far more, all my pedantry, prejudice, &c., for I find that even when I think I am taking the wisest and coolest views of

modern affairs, I have always a squint towards Lysurgus; and I entirely concur in your censure of the conduct of all affairs with Sindia and Holkar, particularly with the former. While he behaved well he was bullied; when he did everything but murder our ambassador he was treated with kindness and respect. Of course all this is entirely between ourselves; in consideration of which I will venture to expose my own wisdom. I think Sindia ought to have been conciliated to the utmost at first; after he left Burhampoor he ought to have been coaxed and an army kept near him; after January 26 (the Pindarree day), if our whole possession were risked by moving an army on him with expedition, the army ought to have been moved. It ought to have occupied a position within twelve miles of Sindia, where he ought to have been called on by letter to send over Jenkins, and within two hours. If he neglected to comply, the result might safely have been trusted to the English discipline and the fortune of the commonwealth. Another course was adopted, and the least bad consequence of it is that we are still at war with Sindia. At least, I believe so, for I have exactly such information as you say you possess.'

'Nagpoor, November 24, 1805.

'Dear Strachey,—My public letter will show you the state of things up to the 18th, I believe. Before I mention the Pindarrees I will just notice that I have fully explained away the Raja's sanguine hopes, and from the coolness with which my communication was received I expect he never was so much mistaken as I thought. My public letter left the Pindarrees at Coondalla, west of this. I next heard of them near Geerar, thirty miles south; and some of their parties came up to Cooe, within sixteen miles of this. They then swept round, and passed between this and the Wurda, and got up to the hills near Pandooma; they were there met by a fresh corps of exactly the same strength, which has advanced to Nurcare, thirty miles north-east of this, while the former party are retiring with their plunder. They consisted of 5,000 horse and 2,000 foot; their main body passed at a dis-

tance of twenty-five miles from this. Colonel Doveton, with two regiments of cavalry, 900 infantry, and 9,000 Nizam's troops, is at Teusa, on the Wurda, west of this. The Raja is making preparations, but slowly. We shall have such another winter as the last, or worse; but I am now accustomed to the Pindarrees, and do not trouble my head about them further than being very vigilant, and particular about intelligence. Some of their marches are next to incredible. Wallace states them to have marched six days and nights without any regular halt, to surprise Omrauty. Yet such was their speed and bottom, that the very day they were beat off from Omrauty, a party of those who attacked it arrived at Bozar, sixty miles from that town, and in eight days from the time they left the hills till their return they plundered the whole left banks of the Wurda, down as far as Warnee Cotta, nearly opposite Chanda, sending parties as far east as Cooe, which is fifteen miles E.S.E. of this place. The alarm of the Court and city was beyond belief, and I think far beyond the occasion. The Pindarrees might have surprised Nagpoor if they had chosen, but they never showed a hearty disposition to try it. The row made me idle, and I amused myself with translating the "Mesnavée" of Meerza Nusseer. I send you what I did with some stuff I made before. I think the translation as near as can be without being disagreeable. The rest of the verses in the original are no amplification of the subject, but conceits and allusions to Persian stories. Even of the lines I have translated half the thought is generally left out. I have kept the description and abandoned the conceit, as when the sky is said to be a chamber garnished with quicksilver, and the earth a girl in a green gown, I thought it best to make "the darkness of the old man's day" sentimental, than to leave it occasioned by the loss of truth.'

There is a considerable change in the tone of Mr. Elphinstone's correspondence about this date. The progress of the war called for constant watchfulness on the part of the Resident, and questions for discussion with the Court were occasionally of high importance. When terms of peace were

arranged with Sindia and Holkar, there remained nothing for the Resident to do but to watch the progress of the Pindarrees, and to carry out small cessions of territory that was handed over to the Raja in the following year. The situation became very trying to a young man of high spirits, and yearning for the society of his countrymen. The capital of Berar was so completely separated from the great centres of interest in India, that he had not a prospect of seeing any of his old friends, or even casual visitors. His letters express an impatience of his position and a desire for change, either by an appointment to another Court, or by a trip to England with his friend. There is much of his reading which is somewhat desultory, and in very desperation he for a time took to poetry, and his friend was overwhelmed with his effusions. They began with a series of characters after the manner of Chaucer, and Mr. Strachey appears to have repaid him in the same currency. As the society was limited the stock was soon exhausted, and then followed translations from the Persian, imitations of Hafiz, lines on the death of Nelson, and other pieces, till he went on leave to Calcutta. The letters from the Presidency are written in the highest spirits, and we hear no more of his compositions.

In the letters to Strachey are occasional allusions to fits of depression, and the subject returns more frequently in his later journals. They are sometimes traceable to the state of his health, but evidently had their origin in a constitutional temperament, and were the natural reaction from an overflow of animal spirits. These predisposing causes gathered strength from the practice in which he indulged of day-dreaming and giving loose to his imagination, a habit with which he afterwards bitterly reproached himself, and which he set to work in earnest to eradicate. He speaks in one of his letters of having given up the mystical poetry of the Persians on account of its pernicious tendency on the mind, and adding to his habitual depression. The solitary life he was leading could not fail to have an effect in depressing the spirits, but this would not have affected himself so powerfully had it not been

aided by the dreamy existence in which he used to luxuriate. Here is his own account of the matter. The date of the letter, which is a fragment, is missing, but it appears from some passages to have been written during the latter part of his residence at Nagpooor.

‘I have left off thinking all for the worst since I got three thousand rupees a month, consequently I have got rid of Ahirman. Since I came to Nagpooor I have been dreadfully coarse and unfeeling. This I attribute in some measure to business, which forces me to deal much with common sense, and leads me to despise refined thought; but I think it more owing to a gross manner of life (spending one’s whole day in hunting, eating, talking insipid stuff, &c.), and which prevents one quitting the vulgar path—

“*Atque affigit humo divinæ particulam auræ.*”

Now that I spend most of the day in a little private room where I am seldom interrupted, I sometimes read with effect, and often get warmed by things that I read, or by others that come into my mind of themselves: then I get up, and walk up and down the room; and if I get more into the spirit of it, I strike up the march in “*Lodoiska*,” and take wing for the seventh heaven. It signifies little what I think of, or whether I think of anything. These sensations are produced by very little, but they are glorious when excited. Alas! they won’t last. The novelty will wear off; the glorious colours will fade; and I shall see the bare walls, the brown fields, and all nature in its ancient deformity.’

At the close of the year 1805 he resumed the practice, which he had suspended from his arrival at Nagpooor, of keeping a journal. It is diffuse in matters of every-day life, such as hunting, reading, state of health; but it contains very few allusions to political events. Its chief interest consists in the record of his studies. To Greek, which he had taken up at Benares, and had not abandoned even in the midst of the late campaign, he now turned in earnest. When the journal commenced he had just finished the ‘*Iliad*,’ not the first time of

reading that work; and from this he turned to the Greek tragedians, and to a course of history, commencing with Thucydides. The extracts which I have made follow the order of date, and are intermixed with letters to his friend.

Nearly all the volumes of journals kept in India are headed with a motto. That from which I now quote has the following:—

‘Tentanda via est, qua me quoque possim
Tollere humo, victorque virum volitare per ora.’

The fragment commences on December 15, 1805. A few days later he proceeded with some of the officers of the station on a visit to the camp of Colonel Doveton, who commanded the Hyderabad subsidiary force. There they meet a large party, and pass their time pleasantly, chiefly occupied with field sports.

‘I wish,’ he says, ‘I had kept a regular journal of a period that afforded me so much satisfaction, and on which, in this solitude, I dare say I shall often think with regret.’

‘*January 29.*—Rode into Nagpoor, returning in utter melancholy, and we all felt strange. My falconer has returned from Patna with a shaheen, a byree, a byree butcha, and a juggeer.’

‘On the 4th or 5th I returned from shooting in the evening, and received a note from Jeswunt Rao, saying that the Pindarrees had advanced to Ramteg. I made arrangements, and went to bed. Late in the night I was waked, and told they were forming on the Canhan, within six miles. I of course expected an immediate attack; but, as all was prepared as far as possible, I went to sleep again. Next day they plundered a village or two, and cut up some horses on this side of the river, then went off to the eastward.’ Things were comparatively quiet till—

‘*February 7.*—I shot in the evening, and killed five brace of snipes under the Zelincare tank. I was then going to shoot rock-pigeon, when a Mysore horseman came to me, and said, “The horse are come!” I thought he meant the Mysore horse, but he explained that the Pindarrees had attacked Nag-

poor. I galloped off through the village, which the people were abandoning with their effects. When I got home I found it was a false alarm, originating in a sudden arrival of Maljee⁷ There had been a terrible alarm in the city.'

In a letter to Strachey on the following day he describes the situation more fully:—

'It is not known what has become of the Pindarrees I mentioned, but two strong parties are collected to the northward (one at Sewny, near Chuparra), and the Raja has avowed to me his inability to cope with them, and his despair of saving Nagpoor from plunder without our assistance, which cannot be given. I am far from thinking his affairs so desperate, if he would only fight instead of negotiating. Yesterday evening I was out shooting. I had flushed and dropped the first five brace of snipe ever killed here when a Mysore horseman came and told me the city was attacked. Although he had come full gallop I found all the villages on the road alarmed, and the inhabitants flocking up and retiring. Finding on my arrival that the alarm was caused by the hasty entrance of some of the Raja's horse, I went up a hill to hear the noise, and neither Jack Straw at London Stone, nor Holkar at Poona, ever caused such an alarm. Several shops were plundered in the confusion, and the panic is scarce over yet. ~~Last~~ night the Ministers announced to me that intelligence had been received of the arrival of 10,000 Pindarrees at Sewny. I think it likely they will now make an attempt on this place, and the Raja seems to think so too, for he is calling in his army, which, if it arrives in time, will prevent any attack; and, to say truth, I hope it may; for, besides that I should not like to lose my books, I have a tolerable equipment of public property, which I should be sorry to see lost, and which, under this Government, I suppose would never be replaced. Otherwise I should not dislike the thing as a study, finding that I have improved in the *trepidis rebus* which I have already seen. At present I do not think of

⁷ Illegible in the original.

removal, &c.; but in quiet and idle times I long for society, and envy you beyond measure—not your Midnapoor society.

‘Ever yours,

‘M. E.’

‘*February* 11.—It rained in the morning. I renewed my plan of reading before my ride, and read the first scene of the “*Electra*” of Sophocles. Having advised me to dispose of my property in the same way, I have packed up my books for the journey, keeping a good number to read. Breakfast. Wrote to Malcolm, Hamilton, and Hemmings. This being a very rainy day I got thoughtful, and read my old journals. I saw with wonder the spirit of activity and ambition which I felt in the beginning of 1803, and lamented that I was at present so dead to all feelings of the kind. The truth is, I have been so long in solitude that I have lost all the feelings that are caused by the opinions of other men. Besides, I have no way open to my ambition. My situation admits of no enterprise, and there is no further rise open to me at present. The want of all rational amusement also has obliged me to take to hunting and hawking; and those trifles fill one’s mind more than they ought. Still I do not entirely lose my time. I read and think and try to escape from this, “*superasque evadere ad auras*,” without suffering my mind to be distracted (by the hope) from my present studies and affairs.

‘*February* 12.—Things are tranquil, and it is said the Raja will not now send his family away. There is a report that Himmüt Behadur, having been discovered in correspondence with the Pindarrees, the Raja resolved to seize him; on which Himmüt Behadur^s stabbed his wife, to prevent her being dishonoured. If the Raja had the design imputed to him he

^s Himmüt Behadur was a Gosain, and, like many of the order, adopted the military profession, and played a considerable part in the politics of Central India for many years before Mr. Elphinstone went to Nagpoor. Armed bands of religious devotees figured conspicuously in the troubled times which preceded the rise of British power. Sometimes rival bands waged war on each other; more frequently they levied contributions on whole districts in Central India, like the Pindarrees.

dissembled it, and went to console Himmudt Behadur on the occasion. . . .’

‘*February 26.*—Read Philoctetes till daybreak. Shot on the Telugau tank, and shot a brace of hares. At dinner received Europe news. The Austrian army at Ulm destroyed. The French and Spanish fleets annihilated, and Nelson no more. I am stupefied with the news; but feel more horror at the prospect of Continental affairs than joy at our naval success.

‘*March 7.*—Had a flight at a heron and a ride, but no hunting. I did not go to tiffin, but took a biscuit in my own room. This will save two or two hours and a half. Read Philoctetes.

‘*March 16.*—Hawked; breakfasted. In the present discussion I am embarrassed by Lord Cornwallis’s excessive professions, and find my only assistance in having been carried beyond my instructions. Yet perhaps I mismanaged in not taking it upon me to be quite open. I must never forget to be always and absolutely open. If I try cunning management I act contrary to my own character and that of my nation, and perhaps fail after all. My diplomatic motto ought to be—

Ἐχθρὸς γάρ μοι κείνος ὁμῶς Ἀΐδαο πύλῃσιν,

Ὅς χ’ ἔτερον μὲν κεύθῃ ἐνὶ φρεσὶν, ἄλλο δὲ βάζει.⁹

Two days later, March 22, there is the first allusion to a plan frequently referred to in the subsequent pages of this volume. When intent on study he used to shut himself up in some secluded chamber. ‘I have,’ he writes, ‘got my little end room, which I enjoy very much. It is (at this time of day) cool, retired, and quiet; and I am sitting down to Greek as tranquilly as I used to do at Benares. These are very pleasant times, but there is some prospect of trouble. The Pindarrees will probably soon be down again. The Raja is discontented with the country offered to him, and will probably attempt to act upon our fears in the hope of getting more; but these little troubles vary life and give it relish.’

* ‘*Iliad*,’ book ix. 312. ‘That man is as hateful as the gates of Hades who conceals one thing in his heart while he utters another.’

He now proposed to build a bungalow at a short distance from Nagpoor, on the Canhan. This was dubbed Falconer's Hall, and was as much resorted to for study as for sport.

‘Nagpoor, April 4, 1806.

‘Dear Strachey,—

‘April 5.—I have passed some days in an end room I have lately built, into which the face of business is never suffered to look. There I have been writing Europe letters, reading over old letters from Europe, and your old letters, sometimes condescending to fag at Greek, &c., but forgetting business entirely. With this preparation I was to-day writing Europe letters and thinking of home; and I never passed a more delightful time than I did for an hour or two this morning, recollecting all the charms of home, the morning walks, the enchanting summer evenings, the beauties of particular scenes which I recollect, and also in recalling particular walks, conversations, &c., with people that I have not seen for a long time. A common observer would not have thought me feeling great pleasure, for I was shut up in my bedroom, and crying all the time, but I enjoyed it more than I can describe. At last I got into painful reflections, and cried in earnest, not more for some friends that are dead, than over past times, sensations, and enjoyments that are gone for ever. You have had misfortune enough in the loss of relations, but you have no means of knowing how melancholy it is to lose your father and mother, and see all your brothers and sisters dispersed in consequence; to remember the tranquillity and happiness you enjoyed when you were all together, and to know that the point of union is gone, and that you never can form a family more. Perhaps the picture owes all its beauty to one's having seen it when young; and in that case it is lucky that one has no opportunity of seeing it after the illusion is dispelled. I shall certainly be thought mad if this falls into the hands of any of those people who only cry when their relations die. (Stupid rascals, because it is the custom.) By-the-bye, I do not always

feel inclined to comply with this excellent custom, even though I may have liked the deceased very much; but I am rather vain of my sensibility, and am glad to find I am not so callous an animal as I thought I was. This country has a dreadful effect on the heart. Unless you form some friendship you have no ties on your heart at all, and at best you have little exercise for your sensibility, which must become torpid for want of action, and you stand a cold, insulated, solitary wretch.

‘Hamilton has come round, and is in perfect good humour, and we are all very comfortable. Write me long, frequent, open, wild, sentimental letters, with occasional peeps down the very abyss of your heart; and we pray God to take you into His keeping.’

This part of the journal is full of notes of reading. After going through the ‘*Iliad*,’ he attacked successively and recorded his remarks on the ‘*Electra*,’ ‘*Philoctetes*,’ ‘*Œdipus Tyrannus*,’ ‘*Alcestis*,’ ‘*Trachinæ*,’ occasionally diverging to Theocritus, Tyrtæus, and some of the elegiac poetry. He now applied himself to Thucydides, or rather to a course of Grecian history; for his reading of the great Greek historian was followed up by that of Xenophon and some of the principal orations of Demosthenes, supported by some collateral reading.

‘*June 8*.—I am nervous and had a headache to-day. Hawked; capital sport, and a fine cloudy morning. B. had my books in the bungalow, read the fragments from ‘*Ion*,’ Euripides; B., Critias; read also Tyrtæus. After enumerating the advantages of bravery, he mentions, as its first reward, not victory and future ease, but honourable death and immortal glory. I also admire the qualities he praises, which, though not so brilliant as those generally given by poets to their heroes, are those truly useful in a disciplined army like that of Sparta. There is part of an elegy that applies admirably to Nelson.¹

¹ Probably the following lines:—

Τὸν δ' ὀλοφύρονται μὲν ὁμῶς νέοι ἤδ' ἡ γέροντες,
'Αργαλέψ δὲ πόθ' αὖ πᾶσα κέκηδε πόλις.

‘Finished Tyrtæus. I am enchanted with him. Nothing can be more manly and warlike. He makes early honourable death the most desirable of blessings. It is certainly a noble and inspiring thought. It may be objected that, by taking a pitch above what the human mind can be raised to, Tyrtæus would fail in exciting sympathy. Whether this be the case, let those who have read him, while their country was threatened, tell. I shall begin Thucydides again; I long to read him, and have often returned to the attempt, hitherto without success; but I am evidently improved and improving in Greek, and this ought to be an encouragement to me. My present situation is charming, and this has been hitherto such a quiet studious day as one ought to expect at this place.’

At the end of the month he set out with Close for Falconer’s Hall.

‘*July* 1.—Rose at six. Walked with Close. Put things in order. Breakfast early. Arranging again. At eight I sit down settled, undisturbed, and likely to be so. I shall throw all public and private letters, that do not require immediate answers, into a box, to be answered at Nagpoor. I shall not even read Cobbett, but forget the French, the English, the—

“Res Romanæ perituraque regna,”

and give myself up to study as entirely as of old at Benares or Russa (*sic*). I have agreed to breakfast at half-past eight, and instead of tiffin to have sandwiches in our room twice a day, which will probably not make us as stupid as a heavy tiffin would do. Read Thucydides to the end of Pericles’ speech. I did not understand one sentence without a reference to the Latin. I shall now see what perseverance can do. . . .

‘*July* 2.—Read Thucydides, and made out tables of

Καὶ τύμβος, καὶ παῖδες ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἀρίσθημοι,
 Καὶ παίδων παῖδες, καὶ γένος ἐξοπίσω
 Οὐδέποτε κλέος ἐσθλὸν ἀπόλλυται, οὐδ’ ὄνομ’ αὐτοῦ
 Ἀλλ’ ὑπὸ γῆς περ ἐὼν γίγνεται ἀθάνατος.

chronology. I read from cap. 47 to cap. 60 with ease, it being narrative; but at cap. 60 a speech begins, and I found it nearly as difficult as the one I read yesterday. I ought not therefore to be discouraged, as the narrative may be easy. . . . Received letters from Adam and Erskine, but did not read them. This day, interruptions considered, has succeeded to admiration, and altogether Falconer's Hall has exceeded my hopes. My health even is better. But, after all, this is only the second day.

'*July 3.*—Read Thucydides and Enfield. Read from 60 to 79. I found Pericles' speech excellent. If I go on in this way for a month I shall make up for much hunting, shooting, business, and idleness.'

On the following day his attention was much distracted from study. 'I foresee I shall soon be ill again; indeed, I richly deserve to be so. I must return to nursing myself—study hard while I am well, keep in good humour, and make the most of a bad bargain.'

'*July 7.*— . . . This day has formed a complete contrast to the former ones which I have spent here; except three letters from Strachey and one from James the additions have not been improvements. H. is now walking in the verandah. I see his shadow every time he comes to this end of it, and as often I expect to see him turn in. I shall try for a day or two longer before I determine to go to Nagpoor. In the meantime the character of this place is changed, and "farewell my boke and my devotion." Wrote letters for leave of absence.

'*July 8.*—I find I must go to Nagpoor. I regret this the less because my quiet here is disturbed, and because I have many things to do there. Read some of Thucydides. Sent off my letter to Adam, telling him how bad my health really was, that a child could do the business here that was likely to take place, and that Close could do it even in difficult times. I added in a postscript that Close could do better than any man in the Deckan that could be sent. . . .

'*July 12.*—Read Thucydides; though the greater part consisted of speeches, I found them moderately easy, and very

agreeable. I might read Thucydides even at Nagpoor if I would exert myself; but the place for reading is Falconer's Hall.

“O rus! quando te aspiciam, quandoque licebit
Nunc veterum libris,” &c.

‘*July 19.*—This was an entertaining day's reading. Besides the unsuccessful expedition of Demosthenes into Nicotia, and of his victory at Olpæ, there is an account of the purification of Delos, in which the verses of Homer about himself, the authenticity of which I was so anxious to see established, are quoted. The judgment of Thucydides, considering his character, is decisive.’

On the following day he returned to Falconer's Hall with Close. ‘I had great satisfaction,’ he writes, ‘in seeing this place again. We dined together most comfortably, congratulating each other on our return to quiet.’

From this time his notes of Grecian history become more frequent, and he enters with enthusiasm into all the events of the great struggle. ‘I think,’ he says, ‘I ought to finish the volume in about three days, and the whole work in less than three weeks. It is really worth trying for. In the course of to-day's reading I met with much entertainment. The conduct of Brasidas and the moderation of the Spartan government command my admiration, while the perfidy of the Athenians after the truce excites abhorrence. Yet still I incline to the latter people. Brasidas is a fine fellow.

‘*July 23.*—Read Thucydides to cap. 50. There are several copies of treaties in to-day's reading. It would be curious to examine the character of the Grecian diplomacy.

‘I am greatly interested in the issue of this contest. I formerly inclined to the Athenians, though I know they did not deserve it. Since then the pacific turn and the moderation of the Lacedæmonians has inclined me to them, and the insolence and contempt of justice shown by the Athenians in the discussion between the Athenians and the Melians make me look with pleasure to their future misfortunes.

‘Read cap. 116, which concludes with the capture of

Melos and the slaughter of the inhabitants. I am now a complete Peloponnesian, and look with impatience for Lysander.

‘*July 25.*—Thucydides. I was not in a studious humour, and could scarce understand the speeches, but when I got to cap. 33, and the description of the departure of the expedition to Sicily, and the solemnities which preceded it, I was as much delighted as ever I was, I had almost said, with Homer. Certainly, few enterprises could be opened in a more sublime manner, or more calculated to excite interest.

‘*July 26.*— . . . A letter from Captain Sydenham recounting the following transactions. The native troops in Vellore (except the 1st of the 1st) mutinied, surprised the Europeans and murdered almost all the officers, and seized the place. Colonel Gillespie of the cavalry, hearing of this, crossed from Arcot with the 17th Lt. D., 17th N. C., and with most laudable energy and resolution forced the gates, scoured the streets, and in ten minutes recovered the fortress. The loss has been dreadful. Particulars are not yet given. This affair seems to me to be equal, in everything but immediate consequences, to a defeat. The loss of men and officers is, I dare say, not less, and the effect on the army greater.

‘*July 28.*—Read Thucydides to the end of cap. 87. This book includes the whole of Nicias’s disaster. Never was there such an assemblage of calamities, nor an expedition so completely destroyed. There is only one place in Thucydides, or perhaps anywhere, that can be compared with the last eighteen chapters of this narrative. Thucydides shows himself equally able to explain clearly the nature of the country, and details of the action, and to paint the noise and confusion of the battle, the anxiety of the Athenians while its issue was undecided, their grief and despair when they marched off bearing their wounded, and the subsequent consternation and dismay.

‘*July 30.*—Finished Thucydides. The last part, about the dissensions at Athens, has been interesting, but difficult and perplexed. Thucydides must be a book to carry about with me. He abounds in reasoning and in useful observations. I have read the best parts of him most carefully, particularly the

speeches, which generally contain the reasons of all that is related in the narrative.'

'*August 1.*—Rose at quarter-past five. The morning was clear and delightful, the clouds in the east beautiful, and the whole prospect enchanting. Tea, Xenophon, breakfast, Plutarch, letters, and Xenophon again—read to the taking of Athens. Notwithstanding all the acts of tyranny which disgraced that city, it inspires the utmost pity to see the distress to which she is reduced. One is charmed with the Lacedæmonians, who resist all the solicitations of their allies, and all the incitements of revenge, and give the Athenians terms, when they might easily have destroyed them; a step which the practice of the Peloponnesian war shows to have been common in such cases. Xenophon, in relating the distresses of Athens, seems to have had none of the moderation of the Spartans. He delights in the sufferings of his country, and endeavours to excite similar emotions in his reader by reviving the memory of the most odious instances of Athenian pride and tyranny. With all his noble qualities Xenophon seems to have sunk easily to the character which the times imposed on the Athenians. He was a brave and skilful soldier, but could fight on any side; he was a man of virtue and an orator, but his eloquence was employed in expressing his admiration of the virtuous institutions of the enemies of his country. Had Xenophon lived during the Persian war his would perhaps have been the first name in Greece; but Homer shows his usual knowledge of human nature when he says that a man loses half his virtue when the day of slavery comes.

'*August 3.*—Read Xenophon. The Lacedæmonians seem from the time of the conquest of Athens to have lost all their moderation. A spirit opposite to that virtue is at its height when they are persuaded by Agesilaus to countenance the perfidy of Phœbidas in seizing the citadel of Thebes. Xenophon's character never appears to less advantage than in relating those events. He that was so indignant at the arrogance and usurpations of his own unfortunate country, describes the treachery and ambition of the Spartans, not only without blame,

but with apparent satisfaction. How different from Thucydides, who, though his wrongs were certainly greater than those of Xenophon, relates their actions with almost perfect impartiality, inclining perhaps a very little towards his own country!

‘*August 29.*—Rose late. Breakfast. Read the “*Memorabilia*” to 99, the end of the third chapter. Received from Hamilton, enclosing a most interesting letter from Knox at Hyderabad. He says it is now ascertained that there was a serious plot in their cantonment; some corps actually fell in on the night of June 19, but were prevented by their families from executing their plan. They assembled again on the succeeding night, but an accidental proclamation made them think all discovered. They were to have been assisted by 10,000 troops from the city, and were to attack in three columns the places of arms, the European barracks, and the park. Orders were issued on discovery, promising amnesty; these were ineffectual, and on the 19th instant four or five native officers were seized and sent to be tried within our provinces. All is now quiet. I much fear all is not yet safe; in fact, this is the severest shock our security has ever received. I long to hear the hints given in Hemming’s letter cleared up.

‘*November 9.*—Set out for Falconer’s Hall. This is about the time when the Pindarrees make their incursions, and I thought on the way about the imprudence of going so far out with only thirty-five sepoys. It was dark long before we arrived, and we looked forward to Falconer’s Hall as I remembered to have done in England to home when you approach it at night in a cold post-chaise. We arrived about half-past seven, dined silently, but in great comfort and good humour. Close and I are the best party for this place after all trials.

‘*November 9.*—Rose at five. Read Anacharsis upon Philip’s enterprises; rode out on Candaharee, a pleasant ride. It is colder here than at Nagpoor. I am now (at half-past eight) dressed in cloth, warm pantaloons, with my coat buttoned, and my hat on. At breakfast read the lives of Monboddo and Wakefield. Such an arrangement increases one’s appetite for study. Walked for a minute in the verandah and enjoyed this enchanting

place. The view is altered for the worse. The many tints of rich green no longer appear in the plains, nor are there all the various and beautiful colours of foliage I admired before. The trees are one deep green, the fields are covered with grain (*jowary*). The variety is less, but the view is still charming, and the scene quiet and soothing. I must often return whenever the Pindarrees give an interval of tranquillity; and to enable me to do that I must give up my whole time at Nagpoor to business, so that I may never be detained by arrears of letters after the Pindarrees have left the coast.

‘*November 12.*—Finished Demosthenes. I must read these orations often over, which I shall now easily be able to do; read also “Anacharsis.” This is certainly a meritorious work, though the style is so ill suited to an Englishman. The narrative pleases while it instructs. In the part I read to-day the preparation for the battle of Chæronea is such as to raise the highest interest, and the defeat is announced so suddenly and so impressively that it operated on me like an electric shock. I grew dull and burst into tears. There are, however, strong objections to this mode of mixing fiction with truth: to distinguish the truth one must look at the notes, and that renders the fiction disgusting. It makes a disagreeable impression, which continues for some time. When I turned from “Anacharsis” to Plutarch, for the first half-hour I thought I was still reading a modern narrative and feigned sentiments. Seeing Demosthenes’ opinion turned to ridicule when put into the mouth of Philotas I respected them less in his own orations.’

There are frequent references in the journal of this month to a task he undertook at the suggestion of Sir James Mackintosh. It was proposed by some learned men in Russia to collect from far and near the materials for a general review of the languages of the world. The Empress of Russia took the subject up, and Sir James Mackintosh applied himself with zeal to promote this project. Mr. Elphinstone, by his desire, entered into some researches on the languages and dialects of the hill tribes. He prepared some vocabularies, and worked daily at his task for some weeks, and sent the result of his labours to Sir James

It is needless to say that Mr. Elphinstone was at this time a perfect stranger to Sir James. Their first meeting was in 1811, when Mr. Elphinstone was appointed the Resident at the Peshwa's Court, and Sir James's influence was exerted in quickening his resolve about publishing his work on Cabul.

At length the leave of absence for which he had been so anxiously waiting arrived, and Jenkins was appointed to discharge the duties of the Residency during his absence. Like Elphinstone, Jenkins had commenced his diplomatic career during the Mahratta war, which brought so many of our best Indian statesmen to the front. He was at Sindia's Court in 1804 when that prince threatened a renewal of the war. His detention there and the treatment he experienced have been more than once referred to in the preceding pages. Ten years later, Jenkins, like Elphinstone, had to contend with the intrigues, and ultimately with the open hostility of a Mahratta Court, at a crisis of Indian history. To complete the parallel these two Indian statesmen had congenial pursuits. When they met again at Nagpoor on Mr. Elphinstone's return from Calcutta, they carried on their Greek studies together with the zeal of two young students preparing for an examination. This practice was again renewed when they met several years later at Poona. The present was the first occasion on which they met, and was celebrated in true Indian fashion by a tiger hunt.

'July 12.—We arrived at Coelwarra full of hopes of meeting Mr. Jenkins, but he had not come when the others joined. We walked out to look for him, but without success. Soon after we learned that he had halted at Donewarra. We sat down to breakfast in bad humour, and immediately after it I received a letter from Mr. J. saying that he had halted to hunt the Donewarra tiger, who had now killed seventeen men, inviting us on. We immediately set out at a fast trot, sometimes cantering. I passed rapidly through a wild country, consisting of jungles interspersed with rice-fields, and after a pleasant ride arrived at Donewarra, twelve and odd miles in an hour and a quarter. We found Mr. Jenkins and Mr. Roberts

in their tent, and after an hour or two's conversation we set off on elephants against the tiger. We moved about the forest till evening, but saw no game, except some of the large sort of deer, and several hares. I had, however, a very pleasant ride, and a great deal of conversation with Mr. Jenkins, who appears to be plain and open, and to have very good sense. His manner is manly and decided, but it rather exceeds in those qualities, and is so far disagreeable and repulsive. On our return home, which was not till it was dark, we agreed to halt a day.

'*January 13.*—Rose early and went out with Mr. Roberts to shoot quails. We both shot ill, and only bagged a quail and a brace of snipe. We returned, breakfasted, and immediately set out on elephants against the tiger. We went through the forest, which is in the highest degree wild and savage, till we came to a sandy brook, the water of which is, except in some places, dried up. The sand is covered with the prints of tigers, some of them of incredible size, and some of the neighbouring thickets are scattered with the bones of men and animals. As we went through the wood some large animal, probably a tiger, was observed, but soon lost, and never recovered. Soon after a young tiger or tiger-cat was seen and fired at, after which we beat about for a long time in vain, till we took the plan of following the track of the tigers down the brook. We soon came to a place where all their footsteps appeared to ascend the bank; we went up, and soon after our elephant, a large male, betrayed great terror, ran back, and discovered by his hollow murmurs, his occasional cries, and his obstinate reluctance to advance, that we were near a tiger. Other elephants advanced, but all with repugnance. A young tiger was seen, and some shots fired from the other elephants, after which the animals ran back. Our elephant ran about in a desperate manner, whirling round in his trunk a huge branch of a tree which he had torn up. Finding that the elephants would not advance, Lloyd and I called for camels. He got one, mounted, and pushed on. I could not get a camel, so remained till some more shots were fired, when we

all three, Mr. J., M., and I went forward, when we found that a large tiger cub had been killed. While we were looking at it, it was suggested that the tigress might be near. This made us all push for our elephants, which, in this thick wood, it was not easy to find. Our retreat was precipitate, and I believe we were all frightened. Mr. Jenkins and I, finding that we could not get near the tiger on our own elephant, went on others. I was farthest back on the female, and stuck on with difficulty. Mr. Roberts talked much of the danger of a runaway elephant in so close a wood, and proposed that if we saw a tiger we should leap off and defend ourselves. In the meantime the stamping with the feet, and the hollow rumbling noise which elephants make when a tiger is near, was renewed; the driver trembled from head to foot, and his fear, as Mr. R. explained, greatly increased our danger. I confess I was discomposed, and scarcely wished a tiger to appear. This was not the case with Lloyd or Roberts, nor was it long so with me. We continued our interesting progress through the solitary retreats of the tigers, seeing frequent traces of their inhabitants till near evening, when we returned home. As we got near the tents we were met by a man who, in passing the part of the road which is the scene of the great tiger's devastations, had seen him on the watch for his prey. We returned with the man, who, with greater enterprise than is usual among common natives, agreed to lead us to the place where we had so lately been alarmed. Thither we went, accompanied by our guide and one of my hircarras on foot; they were instructed to keep close to an elephant that was left on the road, while we penetrated the thickest part of the cover. The elephants soon gave signs that the tiger was near, and soon after Lloyd discovered him standing firmly, looking boldly at us, and expecting our approach. I merely caught a glimpse of his face and fore-legs, which were white, and appeared of enormous size, when Lloyd fired, and the smoke prevented my seeing more for a few seconds. We expected the furious spring which is usual from a tiger when attacked, but when the smoke cleared we found he had fallen back as

we pushed on. The other elephant sat down, and our own refused to advance; but after trampling the ground, and waiting for some time, she made a furious dash forward, and immediately wheeled round, and ran off at speed through the jungle, the trees being small. We were not hurt, and we soon returned to the attack. It was now almost dark. Mr. R. cautioned us to be constantly prepared to anticipate the tiger's spring. We looked with the utmost anxiety, mixed with awe, and perhaps with fear, but our search was unsuccessful, and we returned in the dark to our tents. At dinner we resolved to give the tiger another chance in the morning.'

They returned to the hunt on the following morning at daybreak, but without success; and on returning a fortnight later the tigress had disappeared from the neighbourhood. 'We intended,' he says, 'to have spent to-day in hunting the tigress, but she had not been on this road for some time. For two or three days after we killed the cub she was frequently heard moaning about the village, and soon after she deserted the place.'

The new friends returned together to Nagpoor with much pleasant conversation on the way on many topics of common interest.

After their arrival at Nagpoor their conversation turned on records and business, until Mr. Elphinstone's departure. He then took leave of the Raja, and paid a parting visit to Falconer's Hall, adding, 'All the places brought to my mind the quiet days I had spent with Close.'

On January 26 he started for Calcutta, well provided with books for a long journey through the forest country that forms the north-east portion of the Bosla's dominions. In the unsettled state of the country every precaution was taken against the professional plunderers of the day.

The Pindarrees had recently penetrated into this region of jungle, and a pundit, who appears to have been the owner of a village about three marches from Nagpoor, related his experience of these marauders.

• 'He was here last year, when news was brought that the

Pindarrees were at Toomoir. He fled to the jungle with his effects, but next day the Pindarrees arrived and took some people of the village prisoners. They discovered the retreat of the priest, and he lost 5,000 rupees' worth of property and one of his children. He followed the Pindarrees in the dress of a fakeer, and prevailed on them, by his entreaties, to give back his child.'

The route lay through the heart of the Bosla's dominions, passing Khyraghur, Ruttunpoor, Odeypoor, Chota Nagpoor, emerging in the province of Burdwan, whence he proceeded by dawk to Calcutta. The journal records few incidents of interest, but contains many remarks on the physical and social condition of this wild country and its still wilder inhabitants. He takes special notice of the dialects spoken, and the districts within which they prevailed; but his remarks are not arranged with any system or completeness.

There are many allusions to the oppressive character of the Mahratta Government. Early in the march a potail opened his grievances, and told his tale of the extra demands made on the villages for forage, supplies of troops, and forced labour for building in Nagpoor. For none of these was any remuneration given.

At Tilkaya, three marches east of Ruttunpoor, they heard the same story. 'I find the villagers everywhere, communicative and obliging. They talk without ceremony of the ruin of the ancient chiefs, and of the oppressions of the Mahrattas, whose pride and insolence they have more than once contrasted with our easiness of access and freedom of intercourse. Of course I never encourage anything that is said against the Government; but no attempt is made by the villagers to conceal their discontent from the Raja's hircarras, or any one else that happens to be standing by.'

Five marches on, at Puttergoan, they found the inhabitants suffering from a scourge worse than the Mahrattas or the Pindarrees. 'The potail of a neighbouring village came with a present. He brought his children to see us. From him I learned that the villagers in this forest are greatly distressed

by the herds of buffaloes which come out of the woods and destroy the fields. They erect strong fences, but the buffaloes generally break them down. They come in herds of five hundred head, and if ten or a dozen are shot the rest are not intimidated. They are very hard to kill; no arrow has any effect on them. Even four or five shots from a matchlock, which would easily kill a tiger, often fail with them. Many villages are deserted on account of them. Bankmooma is in this predicament. They are far larger than common buffaloes. There is an account of a similar kind called the Gore; one distinction between it and the buffalo is the length of its hoofs.

The villagers waged a more successful war with the tigers. At Odeypoor, the head-quarters of a Gond Raja, he writes, 'The Raja's son came to visit me. He is a poor sickly lad. I talked with the Gond about killing tigers. They do it with arrows poisoned with a low plant called *mahoona*, which is fastened in the arrow. A tiger dies of the wound in a few hours. They would use the same poison in all their wars, were it not for the expense. As it is, each man has one, and some two. A good archer here cannot hit further than at fifty paces.'

The travellers diverged from their line of march to visit a spring which had burst forth only a few years previously, and was claimed as a new source of the Nerbudda. This strange eruption was regarded by the natives with superstitious awe, and had already become a place of pilgrimage.

'We at last reached the new Nerbudda, which we found by the perambulation to be exactly sixteen miles from Khyraghur (the people had told us it was a Gondy coss). We crossed a nulla, and immediately beyond it found the opening. It is situated in the middle of a field, the soil of which is like that of the surrounding country, blackish and fertile. The earth has been cleared away round the mouth of the spring to the height of about five feet, and for a circuit of ten feet diameter. This space is filled with shallow water, under which is an irregular opening about six feet long and five feet broad, filled also with clear and beautiful water. It appears to be about eight

feet deep, and spreads into caves, beneath which, as he told me many years afterwards, one of them entered as far as we could see through the water. The spring bubbles up in many places at the bottom, but there is one place which appears to be the great fountain, from which the water rushes up with much strength. It throws out a great deal of gravel, which does not spread over the bottom, but boils violently within the space of about a foot, and appears to subside into the hole from which it issues: particles of sand, however, rise with the water, and are spread in very small quantities over the shallow space beyond the opening. A great body of water issues from the spring, and flows from the opening to the nulla in a stream upwards of a yard broad, and about three or four inches deep. There are flags and other religious emblems about the place, but all of a coarse and cheap description. There were several people round, who appeared to have come to worship. Two Byragees appeared to have charge of the spring, and two other fakeers (one of whom was an interesting figure) sat on the bank. They were old men with long beards, they were covered with ashes, and seemed in deep meditation, and indifferent to everything round them. The silent devotion of an Indian fakeer would be very impressive, if our knowledge of the vulgar ideas that occupy these devotees did not take from our admiration of their austere lives and venerable forms. Some of the bystanders at first reproached our guide with having brought us there. He vindicated himself by saying that we had pressed him, and that after all we would not steal the spring. They made no objection to our putting our hands in the water, and the promise of some money induced one of the Byragees to dive into the opening, and bring some sand from the fountain. It seemed common gravel, without any appearance either of iron or sulphur. There were mixed with it some cowries and some betel-nut, which the fakeers pretend rise with the water, but they do not deceive even the worshippers. They told us that the spring was hot by night, and cold by day. On being asked if it ever smelt of sulphur, they said it did a little. The diver says the caves extend but

a little way, a few feet. All accounts agree that the water only broke out three years ago, and that it is since much increased. The Byragees tell a story of it being discovered by a boy who was driving buffaloes, and who saw a figure clothed in black sitting on the ground, holding a tortoise, from under which a little water flowed. On being disturbed the apparition killed the tortoise, the stream gushed out, and the figure vanished. There are three religious festivals here in the year. The place is near the village of Khyree, but is itself called New Omracuntuc.'

Of course there are in the journal many notes of reading. Guicciardini's history, which he took with him, occupied him for a portion of each day, and from this he diverged to Italian poetry, including Petrarch, whom he approached for the first time. Of Guicciardini he remarks, 'He is a noble historian; I am far more pleased with him than I expected. I was particularly struck, in to-day's reading, with the character of Charles VIII., and with the description of the French and Italian armies, and the contrast between them.'

Now, too, he for the first time felt the influence of Sir Walter Scott's magic pen. 'The Lay of the Last Minstrel' reached him, as he once told me, in a box of books. He opened one of them at random, and read—

'The feast was over in Branksome tower,
And the ladye had gone to her secret bower,
Her bower that was guarded by word and by spell,
Deadly to hear and deadly to tell.
Jesu Marie, shield us well!'

The effect was startling, and he attacked the poem with avidity.

I subjoin his own account of the impression which it made on him, as recorded at the time. 'Began Scott's "*Lay of the Last Minstrel*." It suits entirely with my love of the old language and ancient manners, and with my passion for the marvellous. I entered on it with enthusiasm, and read with alternate delight and awe till I had finished a hundred pages,

when I was forced to leave off and dress for dinner.' On the following day he writes:—

'Finished the notes to the "Lay." This poem has great merit. It contains much animated description, and many passages otherwise highly poetical. The system of manners is kept up so well, and the spirit of the times is so well maintained, that one is hurried to the border, and to the sixteenth century. But it has many great faults, the principal of which is that the most interesting parts of the poem have nothing to do with the result. Deloraine's most picturesque journey and his tremendous adventure lead to nothing. When the book is acquired, it is never used. Lord Cranstoun's goblin is at first a strange and awful personage, but he sinks into a Robin Goodfellow. This interference in Cranstoun's favour is contrary to his nature, and after all it contributes nothing to bring about the reconciliation and marriage. His pranks in the castle, and among the servants, degrade him to a mischievous imp; yet his destruction forms an important scene in the action, and is indeed the winding up of the poem. On the whole, the "Lay" is a solemn, strange, and mingled air, which cannot be heard without interest and pleasure.'

I close this chapter with a letter to his friend Strachey after his arrival at Calcutta:—

'Calcutta, August 13, 1807.

'Sir,—Having once been acquainted with a gentleman of your name, the accidental mention of it in society awakened a desire to address you, in the idea that you may be the same gentleman with whom I once lived on terms of familiarity, though the length of time since we have ceased to correspond may well have effaced in you all recollection of our former intimacy. In this impression I venture to give you the news of Calcutta, which I hope may not be disagreeable to you. Lord Minto has had a levée; I have seen him there, and accidentally at Lumsden's. He is a man of as courtly manners as Lord Wellesley; but though he is less lively, he is far more finished and elegant. He seems quite simple and natural. He has a

good person, and stands the fatigue of a levée without being either exhausted or nervous. He does not appear to think of himself at all. He never appears to act condescension, but seems to be naturally mild, obliging, and unassuming. I think he will be popular, but I also believe, from his speech to Barlow, his canopy, his guards, that, *au fond*, he loves pomp, both in diction and retinue (pardon the conceit), as well as *Villainy*² did. He has been very civil to Adam and my brother, but very unlucky in his attentions to me. He began his acquaintance with me at the levée, and to prevent my being intoxicated with his smile he “changed his hand and checked my pride” by asking me if I was a relation of *the chairman*. He next spoke in the most desponding way of the fate of the “Blenheim” (on board which he said he knew I had a cousin), and sent me home overwhelmed with anxiety and low spirits. Other people give me better accounts of the “Blenheim,” so I have time to think on the chairman.³

² I am sorry to say that this opprobrious term is constantly applied to Lord Wellesley in this correspondence. The earliest letter to Strachey contains an epigram in ridicule of his policy, which his friend is desired to burn, on the principle of Cratinus—

‘Nec vivere carmina possunt
Quæ scribuntur aquæ potioribus.’

He had quite given up wine at this time. After the campaign of Assye he became a devoted supporter of Lord Wellesley’s policy, as is shown in the previous correspondence; and when that statesman was about to leave India he wrote a panegyric on his career, which was intended for the newspapers. The fact is mentioned in a letter to his friend, without date. It was reported that Lord Wellesley was to have received no addresses on leaving, and a poem was composed, of which some specimens were sent to his friend, in which the writer dwelt on the benefits to the natives from the settlement of Mysore, and the happy boldness which first showed the weakness of the Mahrattas. This power is described as a giant spectre, which is attacked in style and the phantom disappears. This is compared to a scene in Tasso.

³ The chairman of the East India Company here referred to was Mr. Elphinstone’s uncle, to whom he owed his appointment in the Indian service. The resentment he here expresses had evidently reference to some jocular correspondence between the friends at a time when he was homesick. I have more than one letter before me in which Mr. Elphinstone expresses to friends his gratitude to his uncle for his appointment, one of these being written in the year following the date of this incident.

Charles Elphinstone, the son of ‘the chairman,’ was a captain in the Royal

‘He should have been a *frère* if he could not be a knight. Well, here is young Van. I laughed at and with him from eight last night till one this morning. Here is Mrs. Buller, pale and ill, but still beautiful, lively, and interesting. Here is Mrs. Mackenzie, who has more wit, knowledge, and taste than anybody I know, including men! I never met her anywhere in public, but I have twice at her own house in a week. She looks ill too, but she is so elegant, so unaffected, so lively, and so like a lady, that I believe I should admire her if she were as ugly as Buckhorse or Mrs. L. I have just received yours. I was shocked at Mainwaring’s death, but am now in such spirits that I do not think the sentence of my own death would depress me. My leave in *gooea* (*sic*) unlimited, *i.e.* till the roads are open in December. Sir G. Barlow was invested yesterday, and a great entertainment given. I was not asked, but it made a draft of men from Baker’s that made his party delightful. Such lots of women, and laughing, and philandering, that I was in heaven, and never thought of murdering Gibby Elliot,

“Οτ’ ἀριστον Ἀχαιῶν οὐδὲν ἔτισεν.⁴

‘Vale.

‘M. E.’

Navy, and was lost with Sir Thomas Trowbridge in the ‘Blenheim’ in the Southern Ocean.

⁴ Because he esteemed as nothing the best of the Greeks.

CHAPTER VI.

SINDIA, 1808.

RETURN TO NAGPOOR—STATE OF CENTRAL INDIA—TRANSFER TO SINDIA'S COURT—A MAHRATTA CAMP—DHURNA—MISSION TO CABUL—JOURNEY TO DELHI—PREPARATIONS FOR THE EMBASSY

THE letter which closes the preceding chapter is the only record of Mr. Elphinstone's visit to Calcutta in 1807. From a letter to one of his sisters of a later date he appears to have left it at the close of the year, passing by sea to Masulipatam, and thence by dawk to Hyderabad. This volume of his journal, which is my principal guide for carrying on this narrative, opens with an account of his march after leaving Golconda.

Here as elsewhere it consists mainly of notes of marches, and an account of the country he passed through. Much of it was wild and desolate, sometimes owing to the poverty of the soil, but more frequently to political causes. Shortly after leaving Golconda he remarks, 'The country is rather hilly, and I should think the barrenness of it is owing to a want of water, were it not that the number of ruined villages shows that it was once better cultivated. Most of the villages that are still inhabited bear the appearance of decay, and this applies to both sides of the Godavery from Mudnoor to this place. Towards the frontier it is described as being more fertile and better cultivated than that through which we came; but it is not made the most of. The unsettled state of the country, which is overrun with gangs of robbers under chiefs called Naiks, and above all the extreme oppression of the Nizam's Government, prevent its improving.'

The party encountered no gangs of robbers, but suffered from the depredations of the professional thieves that are to be

found in most Indian villages, but seem to have abounded in this district. At an early period of the march he observes, 'The people bear the character of being great thieves, a reputation they have supported with us, as we were robbed of some trifles at Eklara and of a horse at Nandeir, besides having reason to think we had thieves in our camp another time.'

The following incident occurred during the march to Eklara:—

'*February 3.*—In the night an alarm was given of a thief in my tent. He escaped with a Europe blanket, which he carried off from the top of my palankeen, where I slept. Close was robbed to a greater extent, and several of the servants lost property. The thieves are said to have come round the camp in strong parties, armed, and to have sent in only two or three men to steal. In the morning of the 31st I left my jamadar and six horse behind to recover the property, and marched to Majeram. The horse divided—three went to a neighbouring village, and two to Eklara. They knocked at the gate and called for the potail, who refused to come to them. On their attempting to force the gate a drum was beat and a shout raised, which brought the villagers in numbers from the fields. They attacked the horsemen with slings, wounded one with a stone, and drove away the whole party. They pursued them to the encamping ground, where they plundered some of our followers, and carried their booty to the village. The horsemen now plucked up their courage, attacked the villagers, and took two of them, whom they brought to me. They were afterwards given over to Ruffaat ool Moolk's aumil at Nandeir.'

When he left Hyderabad he was suffering from a severe fit of depression, the joint result of physical as well as moral causes. He shook it off with some difficulty, and it was not until he had been a fortnight on the march that his spirits began to recover their usual tone. On his approach to Doveton's camp he remarks:—

'*February 5.*—I have as yet said nothing of myself or my employment on the march. I was ill when I left Hyderabad, and was afterwards in extremely low spirits, owing to the deprivation

of society, to regret for my friends, to the melancholy prospect of a seven years' exile, and somewhat to the dismal news from Europe. I did not enjoy the company of my fellow-travellers much, but read and thought by myself. I read a little every day of the Gulistan and Bostan for some time, a little of . . . ¹, and a good deal of Scott's "Deckan;" my object being to pick up my Hindustani and Persian, and to get a taste for native inquiries. I also talked a good deal in Hindustani with some of my fellow-travellers, and some of the horse that are with me. Of late I have got into better spirits, and have been comfortable enough, but unluckily a little idle. I have played a good deal at chess, and read some of Philidor. I have also indulged myself with some of Ovid's "Tristia," and his letters "Ex Ponto."

No incident occurred after passing the Godavery till their arrival at Karunja, near the Nagpoor frontier, when they passed the camp of Colonel Doveton, who held a command at Hyderabad. The meeting gives occasion to an interesting but very brief reference to the state of panic into which the Madras army was thrown by the mutiny of Vellore in the previous year. It had its origin in causes as apparently frivolous and incomprehensible as the greased cartridge of 1857. With the destruction of confidence between the officers and men ensued a wild panic, which was compared by Lord William Bentinck, then Governor of Madras, in his vindication of his conduct during the crisis, to the alarm of the Popish plot at the close of the reign of Charles II. Mr. Elphinstone's notice is mainly confined to the part taken by his friend in this affair.

'I do not know how I come to have omitted in its proper place the conversation I had with Doveton on the subject of the mutiny at Hyderabad. Doveton is said by Sydenham, and everybody whom I have heard speak of him, and by most who mention the affair, to have been a principal actor in that dangerous crisis, and to have preserved his firmness and presence of mind better than anybody else in camp. His account of the affair is this: "The sepoy had long been harassed by severe

¹ Illegible.

and harsh discipline, and were discontented from that cause. When they received the new regulations, they were easily persuaded that there was a plan to force them to adopt our manners, and even our religion. They determined to go the same lengths as the garrison of Vellore, and would probably have done so had the obnoxious orders not been rescinded. On rescinding the orders it was intended to adopt a system of confidence; but the alarms of individuals prevented that, first by leading them to pass the nights in bodies and barricade their bungalows, and secondly impelled them to fly to Montresor, and fill him with their exaggerated notions of the danger, and endeavour to prevail on him to adopt their desperate remedies. There was scarce an officer in camp who preserved any degree of presence of mind. The plots and agitation among the men seem to have ceased almost immediately after the orders were rescinded; no battalions ever fell in to murder the Europeans, as was believed. There were some noises in the bazaar on the night of the great alarm, but Doveton, who went with a patrol to inquire into it, found it nothing.”

A few days after quitting Doveton's camp he was joined by his friend Jenkins, and other friends from Nagpoor who had come out to meet him. The party proceeded *viâ* Omrauty to Ellichpoor, to which they were invited by Salaubut Khan, the provincial Governor under the Nizam, and after a short stay they made their way to Nagpoor. Their course was determined by the incursions of a band of Pindarrees, the territory of the Raja being specially infested by these marauders.

‘*February 16.*—We marched to Ellichpoor, where Salaubut Khan persuaded us to go on a visit to him. We agreed the easier as we found we could not immediately return to Nagpoor, for the Pindarrees had made a great incursion, had sent parties within a mile of the Residency, and, going northward in force, had driven back the Raja who was setting out from Chanda for Nagpoor. They did not go so far south as Chanda, but turned through Nachengaon, and passed by to the northward of Carinja, and so on through the Bahapoor and Neola pergunnahs to Berhampoor. Between Carinja and Baum they fell in

with the tent I had left in Doveton's camp; they took it and three camels, and carried off several of the servants that were with them (there was luckily no guard); but they released them by degrees. They joined me at Ellichpoor; the last that came in had been carried as far as Mulcapoor. The most rational of the servants described the behaviour of the Pindarrees as being by no means so fierce and brutal as it is said to be. They neither wounded nor hurt anybody. They inquired where I was; some threatened me, while others said they were willing to serve us if we could be prevailed on to entertain them.

'Nagpoor, April.—It is now thirty-two days since I arrived. I have been prevented by business, and by my not being settled, from beginning to study as seriously as I proposed. I have found a still greater obstacle in the languor of mind and body which this season and the absence of all interest in my present situation has produced. I have, however, read with Jenkins the two *Œdipus's* and "*Antigone*" of Sophocles, two books of the "*Memorabilia*," Watts's *Logic*, and a volume of Grotius. I have read by myself Dr. Moore's "*Journal*" and his "*French Revolution*," Louvet's account of his sufferings, and some other trifles. I find Jenkins' being here a great defence against dejection and utter indolence. Besides the pleasure of his company, I am prevented by shame from giving up any study I have begun with him; this has kept me hitherto pretty regular in my hours of study, when business permitted it; but our application is not very zealous, nor are our feelings very warm. We rise at four and read Sophocles, generally about 200 lines, till it is time to ride. We sometimes read on our return, which takes place about seven. After breakfast, business generally prevents our beginning Xenophon, which is our forenoon's lesson, till eleven; we then read twenty or thirty pages, eat a sandwich, and read separately—I Tacitus and the books on the French Revolution—till two; then we read Grotius till evening. I feel extremely the want of method, but am at a loss how to remedy this very serious defect.'

Mr. Elphinstone's correspondence with his friend Strachey

was not renewed till after his return to Nagpoor. The extracts which are subjoined carry on my narrative till May 18, when he was approaching Sindia's camp.

‘Nagpoor, March 5, 1808.

‘Dear Strachey,—

‘I now proceed to give an account of my progress since my last. I stayed some time in Doveton's camp; he is a very good fellow, and distinguished himself much by his coolness and judgment during the time when a mutiny was expected at Hyderabad. Close and I then went on by posted palankeens and horses, about seventy miles, to a place within a march of Omrauty, where we arrived on February 12, and found Jenkins. Next day, 13th, we marched into Omrauty, and on the same day the Pindarrees, to the number of 4,000 or 5,000, swept a great part of the road I had just travelled, and took a tent and some camels of mine that were coming on in the rear. Close and I had a narrow escape, for had we been a day later we must have been taken (as I had only twenty-five native horse with me); and we had been much pressed to stop a day or so on more than one occasion, but fortunately had not agreed. At Omrauty we were met by the Nabob Salaubut Khan, who came from Ellichpoor for the purpose. He persuaded us to go to Ellichpoor, where we stayed some days, and were entertained very magnificently, in a way which was new to me, and formed a great contrast with Calcutta. We lived in a very fine native house, consisting of two great courts, one public and the other private, with trees, ponds, and fountains in them. We generally stayed in the private court, but eat in the public one. Salaubut Khan, Futteh Jung Khan (his general and entire manager), Naumdar Khan, Salaubut's son, who wears the English dress, and is called Colonel Saheb, and Futteh Jung's son dined with us every day, and we saw nautches till twelve, when Salaubut went home, and we to bed. You will perceive that this way of life could not be free from bore; but it was new, and, on the whole, agreeable, particularly on account of the close view it gave one of the habits,

manners, and conversation of natives of rank. Salaubut Khan's accounts of transactions and services that he had witnessed were very entertaining; and, on the whole, we were all sorry to part with him. When we did go, Futteh Jung accompanied us to the frontier, three marches, with one thousand horse, a battalion, and four guns. I forgot to say that we generally hunted and hawked from daybreak to ten or twelve. We came on in this direction very quietly, till we got to the ground from which we were to march into Nagpoor. We there heard that the Pindarrees were abroad, and not far from us; so, instead of pitching our tents, we marched on to Nagpoor, being thirty odd miles in all. We marched in excellent order, and would certainly have beat off the Pindarrees if they had come. That is by no means the case here. If they came to Nagpoor we should easily defend our plate, &c.; but our bungalows and my books would probably be at the mercy of the Pindarrees, and our servants and followers would have to shift for themselves. Their coming is now very probable; for, in the incursion in which my tents were taken, they burnt some houses within a mile and a half of the Residency, and their parties came to where that cart of wood is passing, beyond the old woman with the red petticoat. If you were here, you would see the very spot. The effect of this and the like is to make the gentlemen here quite indifferent about the Pindarrees, though alert enough in case of their coming. The worst of it is that, though we live in constant alarm, they are only alarms. If we had now and then little skirmishes, and night attacks, we should improve wonderfully, and in time be perfect Deloraines. The people in the town are rendered quite miserable by the harassed state in which they live. Jenkins stays here all the hot weather: he is a little reserved, and dry in his manner, particularly in company; but he is really a capital fellow. He and I have begun the following plan, which we mean to continue while he stays. Rise at four—read books like Puffendorf; at present we are reading Watts's Logic. At six, ride out; at eight, breakfast; at nine or half-past nine, Greek grammar and Greek—at present, Plutarch's Morals, and business Letters, &c.; tiffin alone; then

Watts again ; and we are to fill up the evening with Cicero and the Italian poets, according to our humour, and close with some odes of Hafiz. Jenkins understands all languages wonderfully. *Vale.*'

' Nagpoor, April 23, 1808.

' My dear Strachey,—Adam will have told you that I am ordered to Sindia's camp to relieve Mercer, who is sick. I was to have started to-day, but I am not quite ready ; and besides, the Pindarrees have come down in force, and the roads are shut. I am pleased with the prospect, as it offers novelty, some little instruction in observing new countries and new people. I am somewhat afraid for my health, as I shall have a great deal of heat ; but I hope marching may counteract the effects of it. I should not like at all to stay in Sindia's camp ; for I abhor the man, and do not much admire the light in which an English Resident must stand in his camp. My dislike to Sindia, you must remember, began when I first heard of his numberless iniquities at Poona. The humiliations he made us suffer at the end of the war with Holcar have not, you may suppose, endeared him to me ; and I go to him to see whether reason will not enable me to get over passion in my dealings with him. The man appears to have good manners, if one can judge from the circumstance that Collins (whom he detested) thought Sindia had a great personal regard for him. Malcolm actually fell in love with him. You are a great admirer of his, and even Jenkins does not personally dislike him.

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' I am in some measure rooted out of Nagpoor. If Mercer does not return, a contingency which he seems to apprehend, I shall be obliged to stay for some time, as Jenkins cannot be sent there ; but, as I avowedly dislike the thoughts of remaining at the place, they will probably indemnify me for Nagpoor when Poona or Delhi falls vacant. In either case I hope to see you. Even if Sindia marches far north towards Ajmere, for instance, my shortest way back to Nagpoor will be through the provinces. Before we finish my plans, I will tell, as a secret,

my great project. You will have heard of the intended invasion of this country by the French, with the assistance of the King of Persia. I have written Adam to try to get me sent on some one of the missions which will be the consequence of this impending danger. I take it for granted Gibby and Edmondstone have the worst possible opinion of me. As for the former, he must have the very worst, namely, none at all; but I trust to being a volunteer, and to their not readily finding people ready to go and make their head *gooe meidaunee Shah*.² If I were to succeed in my application, I should think it a service of much danger, and almost hopeless difficulty, and I should trust more to our Lady's grace than to my own good heart to get through it; but still I should like to go, that I might keep alive in myself some spirit of enterprise, and in the hope of being of some use, which I despair of ever being while here. I certainly was right when I discovered my forte to be making up clothes for a giant; every day's experience confirms this wise and ingenious observation. Here is a long letter purely about myself. Do you, in revenge, write a longer letter about yourself.

‘What a bore it is for me that I must be knocked about from place to place, and never, in any part of my orbit, come near the verge of civilised society! $\phi\varepsilon\upsilon\ \phi\varepsilon\upsilon$.

‘*Vale*.

‘M. E.’

‘Camp Dhanoo, ten miles S.E. of Sagur, May 18, 1808.

‘Dear Strachey,—Adam will have let you know that I am still alive, which otherwise from my silence you might have doubted. You know, I suppose, that I am on my way to Sindia's camp, to relieve Mercer, who is ill. I shall certainly have to stay six months, and probably much longer. From my present date you will observe that I may expect to be at Gammidge's in course of the afternoon, and I have to inform you that I shall be in Sindia's camp in four days. Notwithstanding the season, my march has been delightful; and that

² The ball of the king's playground.

you may not be at a loss for the art of making a march in the hot winds delightful, I will tell you the way. I do not know where to begin, as my day and the natural one are much at variance. At eight or nine I rise and breakfast, then write my journal, inquire about the country, &c., and receive visits from Sindia's and the Bosla's Sirdars. I then read Polybius and Gurbert's tactics till near three, dress—viz. put on a shirt, pair of boots, coat, pantaloons, and neckcloth—in about two and a half minutes; dine at three. At four retire to a tree, and have four tatties³ put up round my chair; at five set off, go on an elephant (to see the country) till dark; then mount and ride till eleven, one, or five o'clock, according as the march consists of twelve, sixteen, or twenty-two miles, generally till one; then sup while the tents are pitching, and go to bed. I have a large two-poled tent, and a comfortable one-poled one, both tattied; and I have a camel-load and a half of books, packed with such exquisite art as to be both perfectly secure and perfectly come-at-able. For the country I have passed through to Ramteg is a rich plain, thirty miles from that to Mohagaon, a most perfect jungle with hills and ghauts, utterly uncultivated, and, with the exception of a few villages and some Gonds, uninhabited, infested extremely with tigers (one carried off a calf from the middle of my people), and as they are very numerous, and march very close, you may conceive the animal's courage. Another stood and stared at the advance guard, and then walked off into the jungle. The jungle, low trees, great scarcity of water, fifty miles from Mohagaon to a place between Chupparra, Lucnadawur, forty miles—a pretty, well-cultivated strip bounded by hills and jungles. Chupparra is a pretty large town. In this tract the Wynegunga rises, and is twice crossed by the road.

‘On crossing the Nerbudda the change is beyond measure striking; the country, the people, the language, everything quite different from those of the Deckan side. The country is a delightful plain, richer than anything I ever saw, not a spot

³ Mats, which are kept moist, and placed in windows and doorways to moderate the intense heat of the hot winds.

uncultivated, diversified with mango topes and villages. The villages very neat, all tiled. The people exactly like those at Benares, the language the same. There are Mahratta troops and some Mahratta settlers at Jubbulpoor, which with the ancient city of Gurrah make a very respectable capital for the province. The plain is not extensive; perhaps it is forty miles across each way.

‘Thirty miles from the Nerbudda we ascended the very difficult ghaut of Conee, and travelled on among rocks and jungle without any provisions but what we carried with us thirty-five miles. In course of this we quitted Gurry Mundela, and entered the Sagur country. This is quite Hindustan. Zemindars come to visit us, and threaten to fire on our Mahratta horse if they enter their villages. The remaining twenty miles to this place is mostly rich and cultivated country. There are, however, some rocky and jungly parts. Rehlee, the old capital of the Sagur country, where we were yesterday, is a very pretty town, with many good houses and handsome temples, and a real fort on the river Sonaur. There are many rivers in this country. We have now got into the range of Sindia’s army. He was encamped here for three months while squeezing the Raja of Gurrah Cota, whose capital is about fifteen miles off. The effects are what you would expect, and put me in mind of the neighbourhood of Poona when Holkar was there. I am about to terminate the pleasant part of my journey, and be plagued with Istukbals, Durbars, &c. I shall, however, see Graeme and Mercer. Poor fellow, he is very ill. He has a fever, and a very bad rheumatic complaint. Close is with me. I hope I shall go with Sindia to Ajmeer, then return to near the Chambul and Jumna, be there joined by Mercer—Agra—Delhi—Moorshedabad—Calcutta—Nagpoor. ‘That is if I am to return thither; but I trust the stir of an impending French invasion will uproot every diplomatic man, and throw him 2,500 miles from his place, and me among others to Balkh. In earnest, I hope to see Calcutta before I return to Nagpoor.

‘Vale.

‘M. E.’

‘Sagur, May 19.

‘I arrived here last night. This is a very pretty place, and a considerable city. It is about four miles round (or, including a tank, half of which the city encloses, about six). It is built on low hills, and is very picturesque. There is a fort, but a mere native thing, with very high walls, and no ditch surrounded by houses close to it. Yet Sindia could not take it in his famous siege of this place. He, therefore, when last here, preferred the compendious way of seizing the chief by treachery. The town has suffered terribly from that scoundrel’s violence; half of it is actually in ruins. I saw a brace of partridges close to one of the principal streets. Three corps of infantry and two of cavalry would have been more than ample to have saved this city, and avenged our honour. At present I am at the place where Jenkins was plundered, and Sindia is within thirty miles “*Probris altior Italiæ ruinis*,” and both . . . and . . .⁴ have their heads on their shoulders. Talking of heads and shoulders, what do you think of the present ministry attacking Denmark and abandoning Sicily?

‘M. E.’

The journal which Mr. Elphinstone kept during this march and during his short residence at the Court of Sindia is full of allusions to the lawless state of the country, ravaged not merely by Pindarrees, but by the royal forces, as the Mahratta princes collected a large portion of their revenues at the sword’s point, and for a certain portion of the year the Court was a camp, and carried desolation wherever it moved. The part of Central India which he now traversed had suffered more perhaps than any other part of the continent from the anarchy into which India had been reduced since the decline of the Mogul Government, and peace brought no repose to the unhappy cultivators. There is an exception to this picture of desolation when he left Sindia’s Court and approached the country under the rule of Durjan Saul, the Jat prince of Bhurtpoor. The

⁴ Erased in the original.

Jats are reckoned among the best cultivators in Northern India, and their villages were fortified.

‘*Dhanoo, May 18.*—This is a good large village, with a handsome fortified house belonging to the Zemindar. A little to the west of it is Sindia’s old ground, extending along the Bewas. The little walls round the tents and the places for cooking are still standing, and the place smokes with the straw and burning in different parts. The appearance of the surrounding country is quite appropriate—bare, stony hills, ruined villages, trees lopped of their branches, and the traces of the inclosures that were formerly about the villages. As we passed Sindia’s tent we could not help thinking with disgust and aversion on the wretch for whose convenience so much misery was occasioned, and on the base pleasures and despicable amusements in which he is occupied, while his cities are depopulated and their inhabitants imprisoned and tortured by his orders. As Sindia was three months encamped here, all the skirts of his ground are scattered with the bones of camels and other cattle.

‘*May 22.*—Soon after we met Mercer, who had come out with the gentlemen of the Residency to meet us, I got on the elephant with him and went to his camp. Gopaul Rao and Atma Bhascar were to have come to Chokeea Bondaila to meet me, but were prevented by a *dhurna*.⁵ After breakfast we got news of the *dhurna*. All the Mahratta troops have been

⁵ The practice of *dhurna* is a mode of enforcing a legitimate claim, and is recognised by Hindoo lawyers as such. The claimant who resorts to it sits at his adversary’s door and fasts; and the latter, according to etiquette, is bound to fast likewise. It is better known in India as the practice of devotees, both Hindoo and Mussulman, for extorting alms or making any whimsical demand. See a paper by Sir John Shore in the fourth volume of the ‘*Asiatic Researches*,’ *On some Extraordinary Facts, Customs, and Practices of the Hindoos*. Mr. H. Colebrooke, in a marginal note on the paper in question, remarks: ‘The religious of this sect [of Mussulman fakeers], I am told, will die sooner than recede from a demand they have made. In one instance, which occurred at my door at Mirzapoor in 1797, the man belonged to another sect. He has several wives whom he maintains by this practice. His demand was a horse and 1,000 rupees. He fixed the colour and breed of the horse he required. He stood a fortnight on one leg, resting his arms on a cross bamboo. Finding no prospect of succeeding, he departed when tired of his posture.’

mutinous in demanding their pay for some days. To-day they have prevented Sindia from eating, and proceeded to such lengths as to induce Sindia to call in Yakoob's battalions, to surround his tents with them, and to point their guns on the mutineers. He has also taken measures to secure the protection of the bankers in his bazaars. After taking all these precautions Sindia went into another tent, and amused himself for the rest of the day in playing cards with his favourites. This business has put off my interview with Sindia for the present.'

The following description of Sindia's camp forms part of a letter to his sister:—

'It is difficult to give you an idea of this place. Conceive a king and his court with all their servants and retinue, a very small army of regular infantry and irregular cavalry, and a collection of shopkeepers and every other description of people that is found in a town, the whole amounting to 150,000 men, crowded into a camp in which all pitch in confusion, in all kinds and sizes of tents; add one great street with shops of all kinds in tents on each side of it, and, in the middle of the whole, one great enclosure of canvas walls, containing a great number of tents for the accommodation of Sindia and his family; and this will give you as clear a notion of a Mahratta camp as it is possible to have of so confused a thing. Now figure the same people with their tents and baggage loaded on elephants, camels, bullocks, and ponies, all mixed up together, and straggling over the country, for fifteen miles in length and two or three in breadth, and you have a notion of the same army marching. The confusion of the Government is greater than that of the camp or line of march. When I arrived, Sindia and all his Ministers were confined by a body of troops, who had mutinied for pay. The Ministers were kept without eating, but the prince, who was allowed to do as he pleased, was very little affected by the state of affairs, and spent his days very comfortably in playing cards with his favourites. This prevented my seeing Sindia for a week, after which he received me with great splendour, and from the show and regularity of his Court one would have thought there had never been such a thing as a

mutiny heard of. But within a fortnight another much more serious mutiny broke out, and there was very near being a battle. In this way Sindia wanders over all the centre of Hindustan, levying his own revenue, and plundering his weaker neighbours, with no variety, except that he sometimes halts during the rainy season, sometimes has a fort to besiege, and sometimes a battle to fight.'

'Camp on the Narayan.

'*May 25.*—The number of the forces seems very inconsiderable. Mercer reckons the whole army, cavalry and infantry, about 8,000 men. The success of Sindia in levying contributions Mercer attributes entirely to the superiority of his infantry and guns. The dhurna was yesterday appeased after much difficulty, and the greater part of the Mahrattas quitted the camp, holding out an intention of returning to the Deckan. Mercer thinks they will be persuaded to return. This body is moderately rated at 30,000. Mercer guesses them at 20,000. This is the worst disturbance that has taken place since Mercer arrived. It is attributed to the intrigues of the old ministers, Atma Bhascar and Gopal Bhow, who are displeased with the appointment of Baboo Rao Angria to the ministry. He is Sindia's uncle, and has Colaba, and other possessions near Bombay, but he has no money. The old Minister will advance him nothing. He proposed to Sindia to levy money from them, but he refused, observing that such conduct would reduce him to a level with Holkar. Sindia is represented by all the gentlemen here to be a man of an extremely mild and indulgent temper, but very indolent, and consequently quite unimportant in his own Government. His conduct depends on the character of his Minister, and not on his own.

'*May 26.*—I forget whether it was yesterday or to-day that a camel belonging to one of the subahdars was carried off by plunderers. A party of cavalry was sent after them, but did not come up with them.'

On the following day after a nine-mile march he observes:—

'The country continued as before described, and we still saw ruined villages alone, until we came to a ruined village on

a rising ground, about four miles from our last ground, beyond which the country assumed a better appearance. There were some villages with roofs. These, however, were half destroyed. The whole bears marks of having once been fully cultivated. As we passed the village above mentioned we were overtaken by a trooper, who told us that a party of horse were plundering the baggage. We immediately sent off all the cavalry but four, and returned to the rising ground. We then observed a body of troops passing off to the west and north of us. They did not, however, advance on us; and in the end they turned out to be our own people. When they were seen it was proposed to join the infantry; but Mercer immediately observed that we had better stay among the ruins of the village, where even a few pistols and carbines would be enough to defend us. Having found out our mistake we recommenced our march to camp. After breakfast the cavalry returned; they had fallen in with a party of horse who were carrying off a tattoo and four bullocks loaded with fine cloth belonging to a bunea who was with us. They pursued them hard, and overtook them near a muddy nulla. The greater part escaped by crossing it, but some were cut off, and, by the account of the men, two were killed and several wounded. They brought in a head, which, though ordered by Mercer to the contrary, they kept hanging all day in front of their tent. They are in some uncertainty whether these marauders were people of the country, or Mahrattas in the service of Baiza Bhai, so we affect to treat them as the former force. In any case the example is good, and will make our baggage respected. If they belong to the Baiza Bhai we must be vigilant, as that body is two thousand strong, and will probably watch to avenge their comrades.'

The day after the last entry the Resident had his first interview with Sindia. 'The meeting was stupid,' is the note in the journal after the reception, and it would not interest the reader to follow the details of the ceremonial, nor the description of the leading sirdars who surrounded the prince, whose names were then well known to English ears, but are now forgotten. The sovereign whose power at the close of the century appeared

so formidable was a mild young man, but quite unequal in abilities to the troublous times in which he was thrown. Here is Mr. Elphinstone's description of the prince against whom he was so strongly prejudiced:—'Sindia is a man of thirty-one. He looks about twenty-three. He is not tall, but stout and well-proportioned. He has rather a lively and agreeable face, though his features are low, and his countenance something of the Malay. If he were not a prince, he would strike one as a smart young Mahratta. He had on a very rich necklace (pearls and emeralds); there were a great many strings twisted up together, and put on like a neckcloth. He had also valuable pearls in his ears.'

Some days later the Resident was invited to join a royal tiger hunt.

'Camp at Bahadurpoor, June 20.

'Rose at half-past four; did not ride; got very sleepily through twenty or thirty pages of the "Politique." Looked at horses; heard Akhbars, and Atma Ram came to invite me to a tiger hunting party. We started at ten; joined Sindia about two and a half miles from this; then went about two more to a woody valley where the tiger was. Sindia was very slightly attended, but had many elephants with him, perhaps thirty and upwards, some of them for forcing out the tiger, and others ridden by his sirdars. People and elephants were drawn up round the tops of the hills to prevent the tiger's escape; some of them moved into the thick of the jungle where he was, and forced him out. He, or rather she, for it was a tigress, roared and leaped up once or twice, and gave the sort of puff that an angry cat gives. All the while we stood at the opening of the valley, Sindia ready to fire, and I looking on. At last the tiger went up one of the hills, and ran along the face of it in open view. The sight was very fine; elephants were sent up to turn her back to the valley. As she was going Sindia fired and missed, and the animal went off with several bounds. She was soon driven up the opposite hill, and at last Sindia fired and wounded her. She turned and advanced at a trot. When she came to a bush not far from us she stopped and crouched. Sindia fired

again, and the animal leaped out, struggled violently, and after a short dash fell down into a nulla at the bottom of the hill. This part was very grand. A man was sent to shoot her. I do not know whether he did, but she made a violent exertion, and leaping out of the bushes, rushed a good way forward, and then fell dead. Her whiskers were burned, which it seems is always done, and the body thrown on an elephant went off in front of Sindia's own elephant. I was much delighted with the sport. I was surprised at the boldness with which some men on foot traversed the jungle where the tigress was, looking out for her. We returned to the village, conversing on the way with Sindia, and sat there under a tree. The manners of the Court were here free and agreeable; people talked directly to Sindia, and conversation went on well. We then returned to our tents, and reached them by four, much sunburnt, but not tired.

'July 2.—We halted at Bahadurpoor till to-day. I did nothing but work at business. I have finished and sent off my accounts, and have made some progress in an account of the Powers south of the Nerbudda. I have read nothing but French novels. Last night I received a letter from Adam giving me hopes of going to Cabul. I think I am right in soliciting this employment. There is nothing to recommend it but the novelty, the difficulty, and the danger. I do not feel confident that I have the firmness, and the penetration, and the address necessary to conciliate the Affghans and oppose the French; but I have an ardent wish to be of use, and should hope that a man who courts difficulties would by exertion be able to surmount them. . . .

'A remarkable circumstance took place yesterday. Some sirdars put the Maharaja in dhurna. He was angry and threatened to put them to death. Bhugwunt Rao Byse, their head, said, "Sit still; put us to death." Sindia was enraged, and ordered him to be paid and driven from camp. He refused to go. Sindia drew out troops against him. Bhugwunt Rao continued to defy him, saying he had more friends in the army than Sindia was aware of. The bazaars were shut the whole day; troops were posted to guard them and to defend the tents.

Balla Bye and the Daishmook were sent for to the latter place. At last the mutineers marched off, and all was settled. They were 800 horse. They tried in vain to get the Balla Bye to join them; the latter said, as Bhugwunt Rao had been paid, there was no community of interests between the parties. In course of the day Sindia's famous mad elephant, that played such pranks the other day in Angria's camp, came into ours and killed a calf; but after staying some time without doing any harm it went away.'

'Camp near Sharowrah, July 5, 1808.

'Dear Strachey,—You will find this place on Rennell's map, not very far from Collabaugh. We are going to Jypoor, or to halt here for the rains, or to Soopoor, on the Chumbul, or to Colarus. There is choice for you, and the chances are equal which we go to. Sindia has sent an army into Jypoor in spite of Holkar, and has won a victory over the Jypoor troops. War is expected between Sindia and Holkar. I think it depends upon the nature of Holkar's equipment. He, like a sensible man, has long since disbanded his cavalry, and is forming regular cavalry and infantry, and casting guns in great numbers. He is also saving money, well knowing that it will get him irregular cavalry whenever he wants them. As soon as he is ready he will be able to bully Sindia, Raghojee, and the whole of them, and will make his own arrangements of what remains of Mahratta territory. Perhaps I am overrating his views, but the facts I have stated are correct. He draws a good deal of his revenue from the Jypoor tribute, which always belonged to the Holkars; and if he is ready he will fight for it; otherwise he will contrive to make Sindia wait till he is ready. We have constant mutinies, dhurnas, and the shops shut, and the line under arms. *Confidential*.—Did I write you that I had been applying to Gibby to be sent ambassador to the *Affghaneh Mulaeeneh*?⁶ I have, in fact, applied through Edmondstone for the appointment, not as a request, but as volunteering for the service. Edmondstone tells Adam he will certainly

⁶ Cursed Affghans.

recommend me. I do not think many people will wish to rival me. Some young hand, who wants to rise, and likes enterprise, may; but scarce any old people who have claims. The mission is not conspicuous; it will have much hardship, and some danger and difficulty. I apply for it as much by way of probation and exercise as from love of change and novelty. The worst of it is that I am very sensible of the courage and firmness that will be required in dealing with the three competitors for the throne of the savage Affghans, and the address which will be necessary to deal with Frenchmen; and I do not feel at all confident in my own share in those qualities. Still, I wish to try, and hope, by good heart and our Lady's grace, to get through with it if I am appointed. Write me what you think of the plan, and whether you think Gibby will give me the place. What do you think of Gibby nowadays? I know he is a favourite of yours, and, in taking a favourable view of him, I can myself admit that he is a mild, gentlemanlike man, and modest, well-meaning, unassuming sort of a Governor; but I confess I feel no sort of confidence in his skill and nerve, when he is to steer amidst clouds and tempests. I think I have observed in him a hesitation, a want of decision, a desire to manage with everybody, and to avoid doing anything, that is quite fearful in times like these, when a Governor must be ruined if his objects are not clear, his plans bold, and his execution rapid and vigorous. Figure a Governor (I do not mean Lord M. in particular), but suppose a Governor listening to and thinking over all manner of plans. It is well to send an army to Persia—but then the risk! The Indus is a fine defensible line—but then the Sikhs! We must raise an army—but what an expense! Mr. A. says, Very true—but then Mr. B.'s plan of a campaign, Mr. C.'s of an embassy, Mr. D.'s of forts and magazines, Mr. E.'s of a military desert! After all, the only wisdom is to see what the enemy does, and then suit our conduct to theirs. What chance would this man have with a French general, used to war, who knows exactly what he is to gain, and what he is to sacrifice, who has arranged his materials, fixed his plans, and acts as if his existence every moment

depended on the progress of his design? For God's sake tear or burn this, for fear the Laird of Stobbs⁷ should seize the opportunity of showing his firmness by turning me out of my place.'

At last his long-cherished hopes of action and adventure seemed likely to be realised. Having long chafed at the lot which had doomed him to pass the best years of his youth in watching the intrigues of a Mahratta Court, he now had the prospect before him of playing a part in the great drama of the world. His elation on the receipt of his order is expressed in the extract from the journal which follows.

'*July 10.*—I finished my letter to the G. G. No. 2, and was going on to my summary of "*Hindustan Politics*," when Atma Ram and Mr. Tod came in. While they were with me I received a packet from Mr. Richardson, in Bundelcund, about dawks, enclosing some letters, mostly native, I thought. I did not look at them carefully till some time after they had left me. I found they contained orders to proceed immediately to Delhi on my way to Cabul. I was so overjoyed that I could not help shoving Saitoo out of the way, and making two steps to Close's tent. He is to succeed me here. As I have long been thinking over a quick journey to Agra, my arrangements were soon made. I tried in vain to get an interview with Sindia, and so I spent the evening in writing letters, and choosing books and clothes for the journey. Went on the elephant with Close and Mr. Macaulay; dined; I had a headache, and slept ill.

'*July 11.*—I got up early and finished packing my books. I spent the rest of the day in inquiring about routes, &c., and in talking to Close about the business of the Residency. At five I went to Durbar, and took leave of Sindia. After a short stay I mounted an elephant, and set forth with Close and Macaulay on our journey. I overtook the elephants, and finding their loads too heavy for rapid marching I left my tent behind. I have now a shoaldarree⁸ for myself and a long paul⁹

⁷ Gilbert Elliot of Stobbs was the ancestor of Lord Minto.

⁸ A small tent

⁹ A tent without sides.

for my people, three trunks of clothes, two of books, which, with papers, eatables, and the servants' things, form very light load for three elephants. I am accompanied by eighteen cavalry, under an excellent jemadar and twelve sepoy. The latter I took on account of the report of Cundojee's Pindarrees ravaging the country. The sepoy are on elephants, and for the present I have an additional one to carry them.'

The first part of the route lay through a wild border-like country, showing everywhere traces of the track of Mahratta armies and Pindarrees in ruined or deserted villages. They left Sindia's camp at Girote, on the frontier of Zalim Sing's country (Koteh), and proceeded in the direction of Bhurtpoor. In these unsettled times every man's hand was against his neighbour's, and those villages alone remained intact whose inhabitants could defend themselves.

This is Mr. Elphinstone's account:—

‘Camp at Tirree.

‘Talked with the villagers. They say the village is Sindia's. I have reason to believe it is Judoo's. They talk much of Cundojee and the Pindarrees, and seem to hate him cordially. They say he has for three years plundered Sindia's villages. Marched at five. Country as before, but cultivated in spots. We passed some of Ambujee's villages. They are all on the alert; threatened to fire on me, and fired off their matchlocks to show that they could if they pleased carry their threats into execution.

‘*July 13.*—I rode on at twelve, at first over a very wild country, stony, flat, with hills covered with black bushes. The country then got better; much cultivation appeared; all the villagers on the alert. The people were civil as we passed, though some of them plundered our stragglers. There is something peculiar in this country, its want of trees, its wild border-like appearance. Though all the villagers were ready on their towers, and ordered us to pass them by a certain road, none refused us guides. I am now under a low ghaut, where they say there will be attempts to plunder us. I disbelieve it.

This is under Pahargurh, the Raja of which pays tribute to Sindia.'

'Delhi, July 20, 1808.

'[My journey here is secret, its object most secret.]

'Dear Strachey,—Soon after I last wrote you I got orders to come hither with all speed on the public service; which branch of it I leave you to guess. I left Sindia on the next day (the 11th) at a place between Shahabad and Colarus, and pushed straight for Barree (Dholpoor Barree). I had but little baggage with me, chiefly books and clothes, but I was obliged to leave even that behind. I marched at the rate of forty miles a day, and on the fifth day I got to Agra. I stayed one day and saw the wonders. I did not admire Akhbar's tomb at Secundra. The pattern would do better for a petticoat or a palampore¹ than a magnificent building. I liked the marble Square in which the cenotaph is placed. It is really elegant, and I viewed with respect the shrine which held the ashes of Akhbar. I was much struck with the fort, and I admired the Mootee Musjid. I will own I was disappointed in the Tauj. From Agra to Coel, Alygur, a mud fort, the ditch fordable in several places, not so strong as Hattrass. From Coel here, Mr. Metcalf, a mild, good-natured, clever, enterprising fellow, able and willing for anything. I shall be here at least a month; I am determined to set off, where my orders shall direct me, in the first style. I have told Seton that I shall not wait on H.M. unless I find that the ceremonial of H.M.'s Court will be such as not to interfere with that of Cabul. *Omadeh meeroud beh Cabul.*'²

It will be remembered that when Mr. Elphinstone left General Wellesley's camp for Nagpoor, he was treated with the greatest kindness and deference by his chief. The treatment he now experienced when sent on a far more important mission must have been very mortifying. I should scarcely, however, have thought it necessary to give insertion to the letter of complaint which follows, were it not for the censure

¹ Coverlet.

² A great man is going to Cabul.

which was afterwards passed on his alleged extravagance, and which will be referred to further on. I think it important to show how little he was consulted about the preparatory arrangements.

‘[Confidential.]

‘Delhi, September 5, 1808.

‘My dear Strachey,—*Vide* the end: *Respice finem*.

‘After six weeks’ waiting, I have at last received my instructions. You have of course seen them. It appears to me that Government have thought me too keen, and wish to damp my zeal a little. If so, the instructions are capitally managed. After telling me that it is absolutely necessary I should be in a style superior to Metcalf, they now order me twenty men additional to my escort, as if the Cabul people, or any other people, would perceive such a difference. They might as well have told Shuja ool Mook that I was a senior merchant, and Metcalf a junior. They next leave the appointment of my escort to three or four gentlemen no ways connected with the mission. The same with the surgeon; they then desire me to concert the number of my tents, servants, &c., with Seton; that is, they tell me, who have seen the equipment of every Residency in India, to submit the list of my own establishment to a gentleman that never saw one Residency. It is fortunate for me that it was Seton. I should possibly have been told that two tents and three khidmutgars were enough, and that I must therefore turn off the fourth khidmutgar and sell the third tent. Having incautiously imagined that when I was trusted with the serious part of an embassy I might be allowed to speak on the details, I wrote a letter to Mr. Edmondstone containing my opinions on everything connected with the embassy (except such as had to do with my own comfort); and in return they pass by all my suggestions in silence. Mr. Seton, from his own sense of propriety, immediately waived his right to nominate my family; but it would have been a very unsuitable return for his delicacy if I had accepted his offer; accordingly a party is to be settled, whose names I never heard before. The very first instance of a Residency formed without the Resident’s being consulted will be in a case where I was

(and I think with justice) interested beyond measure in the selection; where I was less interested by personal motives than I suppose any person ever was. It is also rather strange that on such a mission I should have a smaller establishment of European gentlemen than there is at Nagpore or any other Residency I have been at. By-the-bye, is it not singular that in reply to a letter where I talk of Sydenham's plan about the Uzbecks, a plan on which he and I have corresponded for these seven months, I should be told that "Mr. Seton will no doubt have mentioned *his* plan about the Uzbecks," which plan was first thought of some days after my arrival here? I am still quite keen, and I believe it will take a good deal to make me otherwise. It is an age since I heard from you. Why do not you write? Yours ever,

'M. E.'

'Dear Strachey,—I wrote the above to Adam to be shown to Edmonstone, but it is too long and too querulous. I therefore transfer it to you. I enclose also Lord Minto on my merits, not to indulge my vanity, which has a better taste than to enjoy such food, but to show you Lord M.'s inconsistency. The only thing they have done that I relish is their appointing Dick Strachey. I recommended him in a letter dated August 1. I enclose my answer to my instructions enclosed, which must be looked well into. Neh huraun koo warkee khoond maanee danist.'³

³ It is not every one who reads a paper that understands its meaning

CHAPTER VII.

CABUL, 1808-1809.

GARDANE'S MISSION—VIEWS OF NAPOLEON—ALARM IN INDIA—PROGRESS OF THE MISSION TO CABUL—WANDERING IN THE DESERT—AFFGHAN POLITICS—MANNERS OF THE PEOPLE—RECEPTION AT COURT—NEGOTIATIONS—LIFE AT PESHAWUR—FAILURE OF THE EXPEDITION TO CASHMERE—DEPARTURE OF THE MISSION—RETURN TO HINDUSTAN—THE PROPOSAL TO RENT SIND—THE ENVOY REPROVED—MEMORANDUM ON AN INVASION OF INDIA BY THE FRENCH.

THE motives which impelled the Indian Government to send a special embassy to the ruler of Affghanistan are succinctly given in the opening page of Mr. Elphinstone's personal narrative of his mission.

'In the year 1808, when, from the embassy of General Gardane to Persia and other circumstances, it appeared as if the French intended to carry the war into Asia, it was thought expedient by the British Government in India to send a mission to the King of Cabul, and I was ordered on that duty.'

In 1807, Napoleon, having shattered the military power of Austria and Prussia in successive campaigns, was engaged in a formidable conflict with Russia, and the diplomacy of France was directed to the Eastern enemies of that power, and, for a time, with such effect that the British Government, which was in alliance with Russia, became embroiled with the Government of Constantinople, and made a futile attempt to overcome that Power by forcing the passage of the Dardanelles; and this was followed by an equally futile expedition against Egypt.

In the meantime Persia, which had, in the years 1804 and 1805, experienced crushing defeats from the armies of Russia, made overtures to France for protection against a career of conquest that seemed to threaten the very existence of the

Persian monarchy. French agents visited Teheran in 1805, and again in 1806, without leading to any result. Persia had not, however, as yet abandoned the hope of securing the support of the Indian Government. A Persian embassy was despatched to Calcutta simultaneously with the overtures to France. It was not until the Shah experienced a rebuff in this quarter that he committed himself to a French alliance. Our policy towards Persia during the early part of the century may deserve the censure that has been cast upon it, as being fitful and capricious. The alliance was eagerly courted in 1800, under the alarm excited by the expedition to Egypt; but, in the pacific times that succeeded Lord Wellesley's wars, new views of policy prevailed, and Sir G. Barlow declined committing himself to what would have amounted to a protectorate of the Persian territory, and was certainly foreign to the stipulations of Malcolm's treaty of 1801. When, however, French influence became paramount in Teheran, and reports reached the British Government in London and in Calcutta that a brilliant embassy had reached Teheran, and that General Gardane was accompanied by a numerous staff, as if to prepare for the advance of a French army against India, our authorities awoke to a sense of danger, and embassies were prepared both in England and in India to detach the Shah from an alliance so hostile to our interests in the East.

How far Napoleon seriously entertained designs on India must ever remain a matter of conjecture. When in Egypt he dreamed of Eastern conquests, and Malcolm's first embassy to Persia at the close of 1799 was primarily directed against the expected advance of French influence in Asia. After the life and death struggle in Europe during the following six or seven years, Western Asia came again within the field of practical politics, and enterprises of great pith and moment may have passed through the mind of the conqueror.

Napoleon's letters to the Shah in reply to his overtures, especially that which announces Gardane's mission, are very brief; and one would not infer from them that he contemplated more than a war of diversion against Russia. In his instructions

to Gardane, however, the greater enterprise is unfolded with some precision. The envoy is directed to impress on the Shah that unless he is prepared to ally himself with France his country is destined to become, like the North of India—an English province. In furtherance of the double object of aiding Persia against Russia and of invading India, Gardane is instructed to report on the most feasible way of conveying an army to that country, whether from the coast of Syria, or by the Cape of Good Hope to the Persian Gulf, and on many details connected with the state of Persia itself, and its fitness for the operations of war. The convention he was authorised to conclude as against Russia would provide only a large supply of the munitions of war, and the despatch of an army of reserve consisting of five or six battalions and two or three companies of artillery. This, however, was to be contingent on Gardane satisfying himself of the feasibility of sending a squadron to the succour of Persia; while, as regards India, the utmost that he contemplated was the despatch of an army of 20,000 men; and this, again, was to be contingent on Persia supplying a sufficient number of auxiliaries. The instructions, which are short and to the point, are framed in his cautious tone, and provide for an expedition at *some distant date*, when he should have some knowledge of the intervening country.¹

¹ *Correspondance de Napoléon 1^{er}*, xv 213. The following paragraphs illustrate the general spirit of this interesting State paper:—

‘Dans le cas d’une expédition de 20,000 Français aux Indes, il conviendrait de savoir quel nombre d’auxiliaires la Perse joindra à cette armée, et surtout, tout ce qui concerne, comme il a été dit plus haut, les lieux de débarquement, les routes à tenir, les vivres et l’eau nécessaires à l’expédition. Il faut connaître aussi quelle serait la saison favorable pour le passage par terre.

‘Là ne se borne pas la mission du Général Gardane il doit communiquer avec les Mahrattes et s’instruire, le plus positivement possible, de l’appui que l’expédition pourrait trouver dans l’Inde. Cette presque est tellement changée depuis dix ans que ce qui la concerne est à peine connu de l’Europe. Rien ne serait plus utile que tous les renseignements qu’il pourrait recueillir, toutes les liaisons qu’il pourrait former.

‘Enfin, le Général Gardane ne doit pas perdre de vue que notre objet important est d’établir une triple alliance entre la France, la Porte et la Perse, de nous frayer un chemin aux Indes, et de nous procurer des auxiliaires contre la Russie. Si l’exécution de cette dernière vue pouvait s’étendre du côté de la Tartarie, ce serait une chose digne d’attention; la Russie se mêlant

This despatch is dated May 10. In the following month was fought the battle of Friedland, followed by the Peace of Tilsit. From this time a marked change came over his communications with the Shah. The whole energies of the Emperor were devoted to the conquest of a maritime peace, and the development of the so-called Continental system, until he became involved in the politics of the Peninsula. General Gardane's mission, meanwhile, proceeded to its destination, and, for a time, was warmly received; but as the French envoy could hold out no prospect of a war of aggression against Russia, and received no instructions to prepare for an Indian campaign, the mission became purposeless, and very soon fell into discredit.

In the view of the Governor-General, peace with Russia betokened new dangers to India. It did not seem extravagant to suppose that Napoleon, having shattered in succession all the great armies of Europe, should enter on a new colossal enterprise, and that with the assistance of the Turk, now in close alliance with France, the march of a French army into Persia might be easily effected; and once in occupation of Persia, the French forces might enter on new conquests to the eastward. The first thought of the Governor-General was to endeavour to detach Persia from the French alliance. Malcolm's mission proceeded to the Persian Gulf early in 1808, and found the French envoy in complete possession of the field; and after some fruitless and unbecoming threats he returned to ask for new instructions. The Indian Government was now thoroughly alarmed.

An expedition to the Persian Gulf was now organised, and arrangements were made for the despatch of a series of missions to Sind, Lahore, and Cabul.

Mr. Elphinstone's orders, which he received while at Sindia's Court, were very brief. They informed him in complimentary terms of his selection for the Cabul embassy, with a

de ce qui concerne nos frontières, nous recueillerons tôt ou tard le fruit des moyens que nous nous serons préparés pour l'inquiéter sur les siennes.'

Instructions pour le Général Gardane, Camp Impérial de Finkenstein, May 10, 1807.

view to negotiate matters of great importance to British interests in India, and desired him to proceed to Delhi to receive the requisite explanations and instructions. He was then placed in possession of the correspondence that had passed with Mr. Seton, the Resident at Delhi, which entered fully into the crisis that had arisen in Persia, and the measures taken by the Government to counteract the French designs. If the French army had advanced into Persia, their further progress must be met by conciliation or by force. In either case it seemed important to open a communication with the Courts of Cabul and Lahore, especially the former; and Mr. Seton's opinion was solicited as to the feasibility of advancing the mission through the intervening country, and of sending a military force to support the Affghan ruler, if such a measure should become expedient.

It is clear from this correspondence that the Government were acting under very meagre information as to the political state, and even the geography, of the country intervening between Persia and the British dominions. With the knowledge we now possess of these countries it appears wild to think of uniting such discordant materials in a general league against the French. The territory, which had composed the empire of Ahmed Shah Dooraunee, had ever since the death of that monarch been torn by civil wars, and the rising power of Runjeet Sing could never have been brought to act in alliance with the Affghans. Some members of the Council in Calcutta seem to have been impressed by the rashness of sending these missions without some more certain knowledge of the state of these countries, or at least without some assurance that they would be welcomed by these different Powers; for Lord Minto, in a minute, a copy of which was transmitted to Mr. Elphinstone, combats these views, and contends that the power of Shah Shujah was now well established, and that a mission from a Power which stood so high as that of our Government in India could not fail to be well received; and so Mr. Elphinstone's mission was launched on its course.

It had formed part of the first plan that Metcalfe and

Elphinstone should start together for Lahore, with the view, it may be presumed, of feeling the way before advancing into the Dooraunee territories; but it was eventually decided, and wisely, that the Cabul embassy should advance by a separate route and unconnected with the negotiations with the Sikh ruler.

Instead, therefore, of following the tract through which all armies have advanced that have invaded India from the West, the mission passed through the inhospitable desert which intervenes between the Rajpoot States and the Indus, a region of undulating sand, into which the feet of horses sank deep if they quitted for a moment the beaten track, but sufficiently supplied with water from deep wells to admit of the passage of a small force. If, as was supposed, Shah Shujah had been at Candahar, the route of the mission would have proved more direct than it became ultimately.

The history of the mission may be told very briefly. In October, 1808, when Mr. Elphinstone left Delhi, the aspect of European politics was completely changed. Napoleon was then in full conflict with the Spanish insurgents, and the war of the Peninsula had begun, and by the close of the year there was a renewal of the war with Austria. The Indian Government, relieved from the alarm which gave rise to these embassies, restricted the powers of its ambassadors, and repented them of the burden to the finances which they had occasioned.²

² Sir W. Kaye, in his *History of the War in Affghanistan*, says that Lord Minto censured, in a minute recorded in Council, the lavish scale of expenditure in this embassy, as also in that of Malcolm. This refers, I presume, to the presents, with regard to which a considerable discretion was probably allowed to the envoy. As to the scale on which the mission was planned, it is enough to say that that was the act of the Supreme Government. In the opening paragraph of his narrative, Mr. Elphinstone dwells with satisfaction on its imposing character. He observes 'As the Court of Cabul was known to be haughty, and supposed to entertain a mean opinion of the European nations, it was determined that the mission should be on a scale of great magnificence, and suitable preparations were made for the equipment.' With these preparations Mr. Elphinstone had nothing to do, and the letter to Strachey quoted above, shows that he was much hurt at having been so little in the confidence of the Government. It seems unjust to censure him for preparing the presents on a scale proportionate to that of the embassy itself.

Mr. Elphinstone started without instructions as to the policy and conduct to be pursued, except what was of a formal nature. The important document which was to be his guide bears date December 11, and could not have reached him till he was far advanced on his journey, probably during his halt at Mooltan. It consists of eighty-four paragraphs, in the most diffuse style of Indian state papers, and is mainly historical. It carries the narrative of our recent relations with Persia to the date of the letter, and details the measures which the Government had adopted to check the plans of France, and the progress of our negotiations at Lahore and at Sind; but the instructions which were to guide the envoy occupy but two paragraphs, and are very cautiously worded.

This despatch could hardly have been forwarded before the Government became aware of the altered tone of the Persian Court, and the discredit into which the French mission had fallen, and, what was far more important, the revolution that had occurred in the politics of Europe. From this time the mission became simply aimless, and when the Governor-General became aware, from the letters of the envoy, of the tottering state of Shah Shujah's throne, it was allowed to linger on to negotiate a treaty of alliance against a contingent enemy; and when Mr. Elphinstone was obliged, from the state of the country, to withdraw from Peshawur, the embassy was very properly recalled to British territory, and soon after dissolved.

Mr. Elphinstone was at a very early stage of his mission impressed by the danger of embarking in any great military enterprise even for the purpose of combating a French invading force.

To Lord Minto he wrote from Mooltan, pointing out the impolicy of sending an army to Cabul, 'because it would be to meet the French on equal terms, and to waive the advantages of the strong position to the westward presented by the rivers of the Punjab, the Indus, and the desert. In the present state of the immediate country, I fear it will be found impossible to defend Cabul; it is, however, very much to be wished that it

were practicable for us to contribute more directly to prevent that country falling into the hands of the French; for if they were once in possession of it, their invasion of our territories would be no longer a great and desperate enterprise, but an attempt they might make without risk, when they pleased, and repeat whenever the state of our affairs gave a prospect of success. It is also very desirable that we should be able to hold out some advantage to the King of Cabul more attractive than that of mere safety from the French.

‘The state of our affairs may hereafter admit of our holding out many attractions to the King of Cabul; but at present we can only display that of money. It might be expedient to instruct me how far to offer pecuniary aid, in case I found it necessary to counteract French promises, and what assistance we could give in ordnance, stores, and officers. It is desirable that I should be furnished with those materials to treat on as soon as possible, as some open negotiations will probably be required as a pretence for my remaining at Cabul. The Asiatics know nothing of the character of a resident minister, and so much are the Affghans impressed with the idea of an ambassador being always charged with some important communication, that their etiquette allows him only one audience to deliver his message, receive a reply, and take his leave. I have to beg your Lordship’s forgiveness for obtruding the above questions on you, but great importance seems to me to attach to their early decision.’³

In the meantime the policy of Calcutta had undergone a change, and Mr. Elphinstone was informed in reply that offensive operations against Persia were no longer entertained. He was, however, authorised to enter into defensive engagements, in the event of attack from that quarter, and to supply the King with military stores, arms, and ordnance, on condition of his opposing

³ See *Lord Minto in India*, pp. 163–5, from which the preceding extracts are taken. Lady Minto’s volume gives an excellent and succinct account of the mission, drawn from the correspondence that passed between the envoy and the Governor-General.

the advance of a French army. The contingency here referred to never arose. It was very soon found that the tottering government of Shah Shujah only required material aid against his own relatives and subjects,⁴ and the position of the envoy, who could not respond to these demands, became embarrassing, and though the mission was treated with the utmost respect to the last, it was virtually at an end before it left Peshawur on its return to India.

The mission, thus fruitless in political results, gave rise, as is well known, to the only standard work we possess regarding the countries which form the Affghan monarchy, and on which Mr. Elphinstone's literary reputation was at first founded. Much of its permanent value may be said to rest on what will appear as a defect to the general reader. Though it abounds in clear descriptions of the political state of the country and the manners of the Affghans, it wants the charm of a work of travels and adventures. The subject is treated methodically, the principal part of the materials having been embodied in an official report, in which task he was aided by several members of the mission, who dealt separately with the geography, natural history, and, to some extent, with the political history

⁴ In the manuscript journal of Richard Strachey, the secretary to the embassy, there is the following note of a conversation with a native of Astracan who had traversed all the countries between Russia and Hindustan, and may be supposed to be well informed on the condition of the neighbouring countries as to the state of the King's Government. The mission had just entered the province of Mooltan:—

'Passed to-day a caravan of merchants with horses and fruit on their way to Jypoor (by Bahawalpoor and Bikaner). They had also with them greyhounds and Persian cats. Among the merchants was a Christian, a native of Astracan, who had come from thence to Bokhara, thence to Samarcand and Cabul, and was now on his way with horses to Jypoor. He spoke Russian and Persian, was good-looking, dressed like an Oosbeg. He came to camp, and we had an hour's conversation with him, and in the course of our talk I asked him whether during his residence in the Cabul territories many foreign embassies had been at the Shah's camp. He replied pretty much in these words: "Who in the name of fortune will send embassies to these people, from whom they can desire no good under the sun? The King has enough to do to look sharp after his own head, instead of troubling himself with the affairs of other states."

of Affghanistan, as is mentioned in the original preface to the work.

The narrative of the proceedings of the mission, which forms the opening chapter, is an abridgment of the journal which he kept after the plan of his other journals, comprising notes of sporting, reading, and every-day occurrences. What it gains in the published narrative in succinctness it loses in spirit, many of the entries and incidents throwing light on the state of the country and of the progress of the mission having been omitted. Nothing is more remarkable throughout than the cordiality with which they were received, not merely by the Affghan Court, but from the population of the districts they traversed, and this notwithstanding the suspicion that attached to the mission itself from the beginning.

Throughout the whole journal there are only the faintest allusions to the politics of Persia, as affecting Affghanistan, or even to any foreign influence. There was a powerful Persian party that held the balance against the power of the great Sirdars; but they represented no Persian influence, and consisted merely of a clique of adventurers, who by their conduct and ability acquired a position at the Affghan Court, as they had done in former times in the Mohammedan Courts of Hindustan. Well-informed persons knew something of the career of Napoleon, and of the conflict between Persia and Russia; but these distant events had no influence on Affghan politics, and the wonder grew what could be the object and aim of so imposing a mission. At one time they were asked why they were not contented with their own possessions, and why they sought further conquests. Not unnatural fears were expressed lest a British alliance with the Affghan sovereign should prove dangerous to the liberties of the tribes, and a bold guess was hazarded that the proposed alliance was directed against the rising power of the Sikhs. With the common people the most extraordinary ignorance prevailed. Mr. Elphinstone writes:—

‘They have no conception of our nation or religion. We have been taken for Syuds, Moguls, Patans, and Hindoos. A man asked Irvine if the ambassador was a Brahmin. Some

people asked Macwhirter whether his coat was made of leather (perhaps meaning skin or fur). They asked him what he was. He said, in joke, a Syud. They had remarked some impropriety in his way of returning a salute. When Macartney joined soon after, and replied to Salam Alaikoom in the proper way, one whispered the other that he was a Patan. A villager in conversation asked Pitman if he knew Pushtoo. Another, better informed, stopped him with, "Pooh, man, they know everything."⁵

Notwithstanding these misgivings as to their object, they were received generally with cordiality. The respect in which the British name was held is shown at the very outset of their travels. The Bikaner state, whose capital lies in the heart of desert, was at the time the seat of war, threatened on the one side by the ruling prince of Joudhpoor, and on the other by Meer Khan, a Patan adventurer, who had taken part in the Mahratta war, and who subsequently played so active a part in the politics of Central India as to secure his recognition as a *de facto* ruler in the settlement of 1819. Against the advance of these armies the Raja of Bikaner had recourse, and successfully, to the expedient of closing the mouths of the wells; and the mission was obliged to take a circuitous route to avoid the line of march of the armies. In this distracted state of the country those who wandered from the camp sometimes met with an inhospitable reception, and one of the sufferers was the envoy himself.

In following the line of march some of the party pushed their way in the narrow valleys closed with sand hills. They first picked up a countryman to show the way, and then procured the services of two gosaeens; but whenever they approached a village a drum was beat, and the inhabitants crowded to their fortifications of thorn hedges with lighted matches threatening to fire. They were supposed to belong to Ameer Khan's pre-

⁵ Manuscript journal. Some of these particulars are given in the published narrative, which also mentions the extravagant reports current about their power of raising the dead, and making and animating a wooden ram at Mooltan, which was sold for food. The quotations made from the journal are now published for the first time, except where it is specially noted to the contrary,

datory followers or other roving bands, and in one instance a few shots were fired at them. When, however, the villagers were reassured as to their peaceable intentions and saw their white faces, they were treated with hospitality and assisted on their way. On one occasion one old man seemed to have great authority among them. 'He was delighted when he saw my white face; and when I took off my glove, he smacked my hand and declared his heart at ease, and called out to the villagers that we were friends; and they took us to a well, where we watered our horses.'

Mr. Elphinstone does not appear to have kept up any regular correspondence with his friends during his absence from Hindustan, except what was of a semi-official character. The only letter addressed to any member of his family which is extant was written to his sister, Miss Clementina Elphinstone, giving a summary of his proceedings after his return. To his friend Strachey he wrote occasionally.

The journal of his travels contains, as might be expected, many notes of the country and its inhabitants, but not much of reading. He took, as companions of his leisure hours, 'Tacitus' and 'Clarendon,' and there is an occasional note of his having finished a day with one or other of these authors. On natural scenery he was as enthusiastic as ever. I insert an account of the ascent of a hill on the Indus, within command of the highest peak of the western range:—

‘Fraser and I determined to ascend the highest hill without dismounting. We were joined by Strachey, Morris, and Irvine. We got the old Persian, and a guide who spoke nothing but Pushtoo, and set off. We went round a stony hill, which is in front of the principal one, and, after riding two or three miles, entered a water-course, which led into the hill; it grew gradually narrower, till one could almost touch both sides at once. The sides were very lofty, and the view of the hills on the country in the rear, seen through the opening, was very striking. At last the valley wound in and shut out all prospect, and we went on through

this romantic passage, which seemed the entrance of the fallen Peri Bannoo's palace; in one place the stone, which was polished by the water, looked like white marble, and I fancy was the stone of which Sufder Jung's tomb is made. Thus far we had ridden, but the way becoming rough we dismounted, and left our horses. Soon after we went over a branch of the hill into a rather wider valley. When we got to the top of this branch of the hill, we saw the high craggy hill above us to the left; to the right was the wide valley, and the heaped hills before us were a mass of rock with innumerable regular semicircular strata. We crossed the valley, and after much dissuasion from the guide and the old Persian, whom we left behind, we began to ascend. We were all much fatigued at first. Irvine got ill and went back; we pushed on, and as it was cool (though, of course, we were warmed by the exercise) and we were now and then gratified by new views, we got on cheerfully. We had some bread and butter, two surahees⁶ of water, and a bottle of brandy. We ate and drank on the way up, and our guide took a good share, of which we grudged him the water, as we were obliged to count the gulps each took. At last we reached what we thought the top, and found we had at least a third of the way remaining. We determined to persevere, and to turn back at four, which we reckoned would allow time to get home by dark. We pushed on, and after a good long walk on level ground, and a still longer conversation with the guide, in which he spoke Pushtoo and I English—he wished to go to the round hill, where there is a place of pilgrimage, and I to the crags, where I expected a fine view—we began to ascend the crags. The guide kept on the level ground. I separated from the rest, and got into a bad ascent: it was rock, covered with loose stones, tufts of grass, and here and there plants like tops of palm trees, byres, and a bush which the guide called *Sham-shaud*. It was very steep, and below was a profound valley, the bottom of which was scarce in sight. I became a little nervous, and clung to the stones, thinking how I should get

⁶ Bottles or pitchers.

down again; but presently I determined to push on, and at last reached the top much exhausted. The shouts of the guide and of the rest had a striking and romantic effect. Even after speaking in a common key, I heard the echo, which sounded like someone shouting far off in the depths of the valley. When at last I reached the top, exhausted and breathless, I lost all thought of fatigue in the grandeur of the objects before me. Close at my feet was a precipice, from which the high hills below looked like furrows in a field; our camp was scarce visible, and the whole plain was reduced to a confused mass. The great distance and dimness of the bottom of the cliff itself contributed most to the effect; but no language can do justice to its awful perspective. When I had time to look round I was shown the course of the Indus, marked by mist and vapour. The valley of the Esaukhail to the east; the cultivated plains of the Moowut, bounded by lofty mountains, to the west. To the west lay Takwarra, Tak, and all Damaun, up to the mountains; and to the south the vast plain presented no object but the Indus. The plains were everywhere covered with vapour, and dimly seen. After staying some time in a little flat place, surrounded by a wall of loose stones, we went downwards, along the edge of the precipice, where every step presented some new wonder. In some places deep clefts in the rocks, of which we could see no bottom, seemed to have cut off one huge mass from the rest; in others the place on which we were going had already sunk and seemed to require but little impulse to make it add to the heaps of rock at the base of the precipice; but the grandest view was presented by the cliff itself when seen from a projecting point in the rock. The whole face of the precipice stood forth, a lofty, bold, and magnificent mass, and presented an object beyond description grand and sublime. The same vast rock rose far above us, and stretched beneath almost as far as our eyes could follow it. Below the hills, which I have described as two-thirds of the whole, seemed merely heaps of rocks that had fallen in a succession of ages from the lofty pile. It resembled the rock which I have so often admired in Davis's picture of Rotas;

but far excelled it in sublimity. We quitted this place with reluctance, and reached the valley where our horses were, in little more than an hour; we had taken three at least to ascend. Nothing surprises me more than the height of this hill seen from Dera. At the distance of twenty miles, it scarce seems a hill before the Throne of Solomon, which is at three times the distance. Even here it sinks into insignificance before that mighty mountain. Yet from half its height our camp looked like a private tent, and the horses in the valley were barely visible. When we mounted, the sun was set; we passed once more the fairy passages, and bade the mountain, with all its romantic valleys, its clefts, its crags, and its echoes, farewell. Thus ended one of the pleasantest days I have passed since my journeys in Mysore. It was quite dark when we returned, and we narrowly escaped falling down a deep ridge of gravel. At last we found the fires of camp, and got into the discussion and trouble of our next march.'

The impression made on the mission on approaching Cohaut by the sight of plants and even weeds that reminded them of an English spring is vividly given in the published narrative, but it is better told in the following extract from a letter to his sister:—

'After some more days of mountains and days of torrents we came into a most delightful valley at a place called Cohaut. Before you can understand how much we enjoyed this, I must tell you that in India we have scarcely a single European tree, flower, or weed; that the climate and country have not the smallest resemblance to those at home, and that the trees keep their leaves all the year, and we have neither winter nor spring. At Cohaut, on the contrary, the spring was just beginning, and the hills within five or six miles were covered with snow. The ground was covered with thick green grass, with all the common English weeds. The trees, which were willow and were just budding, and the blossoms of the apple, plum, cherry, &c., were just coming out. A branch of a plant, very famous in India for a perfume that is made from it, and which is there called *beedee mishk* (musk willow), was brought to me, and conceive

my surprise when I found it the common thing which in Scotland we call palm, and which grows in such abundance on the little mount near the policy, and close to the place which we used to call Castle Dubs. When I smelt it I almost thought myself at Cumbernauld.'

Before they reached Mooltan they had some insight into Affghan politics. Shah Shujah, so far from being well established, occupied a throne that could only be secured by constant and vigorous action. The monarchy was limited by the power of the tribes and their chiefs, and the outlying provinces were loosely held together by the strong arm of power. In some ingenious speculations on the possibility of engrafting free institutions on such a government, Mr. Elphinstone in his work on Cabul draws a comparison between the Affghan monarchy and that of Scotland in old times:—

'With the exception of the Republican government of the Ooloosses, the situation of the Affghan country appears to me to bear a strong resemblance to that of Scotland in ancient times. The direct power of the King over the towns and the country immediately around, the precarious submission of the nearest clans and the independence of the remote ones, the inordinate power and faction of the nobility most connected with the Court, and the relations borne by all the great lords to the crown, resemble each other so closely in the two states that it will throw light on the character of the Dooraunee government to keep the parallel in view.'⁷

The free manners and the outspoken character of the people attracted his early attention. Shortly after leaving Mooltan he writes:—'Most of the people belonging to the Court of Cabul, as far as I have seen, make no scruple of talking of the weakness of the Government, and some even hint in very intelligible terms at its instability. In the course of these two or three days I have had a good deal of talk with Gholam Russool Shah. He has given me much information about the country. He has been at Peshawur, and his account of the treatment he received from the Eliaut is very remarkable. He was everywhere treated

⁷ *Kingdom of Cabul*, i 230.

with the highest honours as a Syud, and in some places the people flocked out and poured water on his feet, which they caught again in a cup and drank.'

This special reverence for a Syud seems strange, considering the number that swarmed about the country. But the attention to the outward observances of religion formed a contrast to the manners of Hindustan. While on the Indus they received a visit from some Affghan chiefs. 'We had,' he writes, 'a good deal of cheerful conversation till it was time for evening prayers, when the Affghans withdrew and prayed at the tent-door before they mounted. The attention to religion is striking, when contrasted with Hindustan. It pervades the conversation, even of people not themselves religious. The name of God is introduced on all occasions.'

On their arrival at Cohaut they received a visit from the Haukim of that place.

'February 18.—The Haukim of Cohaut was announced. I sat a couple of hours with him. He is a very pleasant, intelligent, plain man. He entered very largely into the state of the Court and into our probable views. The sum of his conversation was that we were either going to spy into the country and take it (in which case we should be soon treated as enemies), or to ask the King's assistance, in which case we might either ask to raise men or give them money. The first would awaken suspicions; the second would be mere waste, for the Affghans had too much to do at home to be of use to us in attacking others. The burden of his song was that we ought to depend on Akram Khan,⁸ and have as little as possible to do with the Kuzzlebashes, and that we might rely on him as a humble but faithful friend if ever we got into difficulties. He said his ancestors had been under Hindustan, that he wore the Hindustanee dress and understood the language, that he could raise 5,000 men, &c. He said he was on bad terms with the Saugharees and Khutrees, but on good terms with Mullich Auzim. He mentioned that a fort in Shubhurdurah had fired on him the other day; on which he issued money to the Bauriks (whom he called the

⁸ The Prime Minister.

thieves of these parts), collected 5,000 of them without the King's leave or knowledge, "Thus (he said) we Affghans go on." He talked of the King's weakness quite openly; like every one else, said the Affghans were all thieves. He mentioned incidentally that he had seen a genie in his youth, and had stuttered ever since.'⁹

While halting at Cohaut he wrote:—

'On returning from the garden I was joined by Omar Khan, Azeez Oollah's son, who rode with us and talked of the oppression of the Dooraunees. I was surprised at the openness with which he spoke his sentiments. We were at one time talking of hunting, and he said he was fond of it, but never indulged in it. He said the extortions of the Dooraunees prevented any enjoyment that looked like opulence. Some of the King's horse were riding by at the time, and he said aloud in Persian, "That *loollah*," pointing to their sheepskin caps, "is our ruin."

As the mission approached Peshawur he was enabled to take a measure of the 'maze of intrigues' by which he was surrounded, and the account agrees in the main with the summary which was presented in the published narrative, while it enters more on the personal motives of the different chiefs or parties by whom he was beset. The appearance of the representative of British power, supported by a numerous staff, could not fail to be regarded with a mixture of hope and alarm by the sovereign and his courtiers; but the impression we receive is on the whole favourable to the Affghans. It was very soon found that the embassy had nothing to offer to the King, who was in great straits, but an alliance against a remote or contingent enemy, and as the envoy steadily refused all proposals for aid against the dangers which were at hand, it is singular that the stay of

⁹ 'Azeez Oollah Khan talked of the divided state of the empire. He said, however, that in case of foreign invasion the Affghans always united. He is a plain, sensible man about fifty. He speaks Persian well, but has an impediment in his speech. This he accounted for thus. When he was very young, one day a jin appeared to him. In consequence of the fright occasioned by that sight his tongue fell half a yard out of his mouth. In the course of time it receded, and the only evil which was caused was the hesitation of speech which he now has.'—Strachey's MS. Journal.

the mission should have extended over so many months. The Court was evidently of opinion that their presence added something to its own importance, and they were treated with cordiality to the last.

There is an interesting passage in the body of the work on Cabul describing his interviews with the leading Persian ministers and Affghan sirdars, with some sketches of their character and manners, which should have found their proper place in the personal narrative. It is too long for quotation, but it may be referred to in illustration of the frank and straightforward manners of the Dooraunees. At a meeting of the council of the sirdars, to which he was invited, after the failure of the Cashmere expedition, and when the King's affairs were at their worst, he was strongly pressed to lend some material assistance; but when the envoy replied, with the reserve to which he was enjoined by his instructions, one of the number, who was already intriguing with the enemy, began a factious and even sarcastic speech. He was immediately silenced by the rest, who changed the subject at once, lamented the disorder of the kingdom, which prevented the mission having been received with all the honours that were due, and enjoying the pleasures which their country afforded; and this conversation lasted till the party broke up. 'After this,' says Mr. Elphinstone, 'I was no longer importuned by anybody, but I perceived no diminution in the attention or hospitality of the Court.'

But I am in this anticipating events. February 18th was an important day in the history of the embassy, as it brought to the camp intelligence of the success of Shah Shujah's brother, and of the rising hopes of Europe.

'After breakfast Mullich Auzim acquainted me with the loss of Candahar, and that Futteh Khan's brother had fled from the King with 2,000 Dooraunees, and pushed off by Louchee, cutting up some Khutucks who attempted to oppose him. The glorious news from Europe is confirmed. God grant that it may be the dawn of liberty to all the nations!'¹

¹ I find the following entry in the Journal of November 5, 1815.—'Our heads have been turned for these three days with joy at Lord Wellington's

This evidently refers to the rising of the Spaniards, and the success which attended their first efforts to throw off the French yoke. Two months later the news reached Peshawur of the first of the Peninsular victories of the General Wellesley of Assye. It is curious that this also arrived simultaneously with the report of new disasters in Affghanistan. The second of the following extracts gives the floating rumours that met the mission shortly after they had joined the Court:—

'Peshawur, March 6.—Walked about with Strachey, and talked over the politics of this Court at present. There is a report that Mahmood has taken Ghuznee, and threatens Cabul. It appears very doubtful if the Government will stand. The people about Court think Cashmere will be settled in two months, and that Akram Khan will be back as soon as the roads are open, and consequently be able to oppose the rebels before they get a footing, in which case they think all safe. They rely, or pretend to rely, on being joined by the Mussulman Rajas of Cashmere. But the common people think Cashmere will hold out, and it seems agreed that Mahmood has a great army and many khans with him.'

'Peshawur, March 8.—News of General Wellesley's victories in Portugal. Suspicions have been excited in consequence of Irvine's having hired a Hindoo of this place, and made a few innocent inquiries. I thought it best, on this account, to suspend all geographical inquiries *in toto* for a month or six weeks, which I immediately communicated to the surveyor. It is still dark and gloomy, and I have been in low spirits all day, wishing I were in Portugal, and fearing no credit will be got or much good done here.'

In the report of his first audience with the King there occurs an incident that does not appear in the published narrative.

victory, and all our other successes. These instances of good fortune often make me think of the dawning of our hopes which first reached me in the valley of the Bouriks—

'Et pulcher fugatis
Ille dies Latio tenebris,
Qui primus alma risit adorea.'

‘After all was arranged the King of Cabul asked after the King, then how long we had been from Delhi, and I believe some similar questions. I was then whispered to tell the other gentlemen to retire, which was done. The King then desired Strachey and me to advance and be seated. We advanced a little short of the place pointed out to us, and sat down; when the King began to talk of his friendship for the Government, to which I gave a suitable reply. I then mentioned I had a letter, which I would deliver, if desired. The King consented, and Meerza Shereef produced the letter. I had given it to the chaush bashee to be delivered to me in the room, an arrangement he had suggested, for the purpose no doubt of preventing my attempting to deliver it into the King’s own hand. Merza Shereef read it aloud and well, and the King again spoke of the friendship, and his desire that it should increase. I made the best replies I could, and his Majesty then asked about England. When I had explained to him that the climate, fruits, and trees were the same as those of Cabul, he said, “Then the two kingdoms are made by nature to be united,” and renewed his professions of friendship. I then asked whether he would hear my business now, or at another audience, and, on his replying now, I got up and briefly stated the cause of the embassy. The King made very friendly replies, talked very boldly of the strength of his Empire. Meerza Shereef generally repeated what I said to the King, but I was twice obliged to correct his repetition. Instead of stating that the Governor-General left the detail of the treaty to him, as his country was first to be attacked, he said in general terms that we had come to offer our services in any way, and on my explaining the particular danger we wished to aid in repelling, he represented us as coming to seek his Majesty’s powerful protection; on which I with a clear voice said, that if (which God avert) the Affghan dominions should be conquered, Providence had given us the means of defending those of the King of England, and of severely chastising any one who should presume to attack them; but, as union was the best of policy, and as we were deeply interested in his

Majesty's welfare, we were anxious for his safety, &c. After the King's declaring that he would with pleasure agree to anything we wished, I proposed a treaty, which I said was the manner of expressing friendship among Kings, and the King immediately agreed, and said he would hereafter arrange that as we desired.'

This scene, so graphically described in the journal, is an epitome of the negotiations which followed. The aim of the King's Ministers was to impress on the mission the inherent strength of the Affghan monarchy. Divided as they were among themselves, they asserted that there was a national spirit that would rally them against a foreign invader.

A French or Persian force, they said, could only enter with the assistance of an Affghan sovereign, who might ally himself with these nations for the invasion of India. The Dooraunees could never divest themselves of the notion that a Power which sent an important mission to court their alliance must have acted under a sense of insecurity, and it became the duty of the British envoy to insist on the strength and independence of the British Government. 'I answered them' (Mr. Elphinstone wrote to Lord Minto) 'that if the British Government had thought their co-operation necessary to its safety, I should have been authorised to purchase it by concessions. At present your Lordship empowered me to offer aid and to hear what they required, but reserved the decision to yourself. In the meantime you depended on your own means of warding off the danger. I then gave a short account of our expedition to Spain and Portugal, and explained the preparations at Bombay, as far as I could with propriety, and concluded by saying that we had often been at war with all the world, and had never suffered in the contest, and that if the French, by any means, got this country into their power, we should still be able to oppose them, as we had been in many more difficult junctures.'

All this discussion with the Court of Cabul began and ended with demands for aid against the rebellion of the King's brother; and when Mr. Elphinstone referred the question to the Government of Calcutta, the Ministers expressed their surprise, and

disparaged a mission that had nothing to offer in return for an alliance with the King. These arguments were not wanting in force and ingenuity, and a specimen of them is subjoined, as it appeared to have made an impression on the envoy, who subsequently reported favourably on the proposal.

‘They stated that an alliance for the purpose of repelling one enemy was imperfect, and that true friendship between two states could only be maintained by identifying their interests in all cases; that Shah Mahmood had not influence over the Dooraunees, and would be obliged, if he obtained the crown, to put himself under the protection of the Persians to maintain his authority; that he had before connected himself with that people, and was naturally inclined to them; and that, from the moment of his restoration to the government of his country, we might consider the French and Persians as already on the Indus. They said that the Affghans were a powerful people against foreign invaders, and that when the French and Persians came, they might not require our assistance, but that we might regret our tardy aid, if, before the threatened attack commenced, the present Government of this country was overthrown, and all the fruit of our alliance with it destroyed. Supposing a weaker case, and Shah Soojah was only able to make head against the rebels without destroying them, they said that an attack from the French and Persians might then be difficult to withstand, and it might cost millions to effect what might now be done for thousands. Throughout their whole discourse they seemed to consider the invasion of the French and Persians to be by no means formidable, unless aided by intestine divisions; but they were candid enough to admit that the war with those nations concerned them as much as it did us.’

I return to the MS. journal, from which I give some miscellaneous extracts.

‘*March 6.*—I know little of the details of the internal government; it must be execrable. Merchants are afraid to produce their goods, lest they should be seized. It is doubted whether I can get a house for some of my people, because we

belong to the King, and his Majesty's people never part with anything they once get hold of. Our soorsaut, I understand, is levied on the town, and our dresses were taken from bankers, without, as I understand, even the ceremony of a promise of repayment. In course of our ride this morning we saw a couple of Persian-looking men, who had turned their mules loose in a field of wheat, and were waiting till they had fed.'

• • • • •
'Mirza Geraumee² came after breakfast and stayed for a long time, talking of our wars, our Government, and regulations. He put one direct question about the object of this mission, which was probably the true cause of his coming. It was whether we would assist the King against Mahmood. When he was gone Giuseppe came and sat long; he talked much more freely than before. He was sent by Aboul Nusseer to find out our real objects, and to puff his employer. He informed us that the Persians here had an aversion to eating with Christians, which the Affghans had not. He remarked that the great Affghans were seldom or never haughty, and, indeed, it is most striking how different this nation is from its descendants in India. The latter are full of pomp and rhodomontade, and mix an affectation of roughness and ferocity with their love of show and ceremony; while the Affghans are a people of plain man-

² Mirza Geraumee Khan was the son of a Persian nobleman; he had been in India, and, at the time of Mr. Elphinstone's recent visit, held the office of Moonshée Bashee, or Secretary of State. When Mr. Elphinstone, on the occasion of receiving some visitors, told them that there had been no rebellion in our nation since 1745, Mirza Geraumee, when the rest of the company had gone, told him, with a smile, that he had forgotten the American war (see *Introduction* to the Account of Cabul, p. 82). Giuseppe, or De Joseph, was a vagabond adventurer of plausible manners, who attached himself to the envoy shortly after his arrival. He is thus described: 'I was visited by a person calling himself Antoine de Joseph, a German. He was dressed and walked like a Persian, but when seated he had the manner of a European, and offered me a . . .'¹ with Parisian civility. He is a native of Constantinople, son to the Austrian dragoman. He says he has been at Vienna and Trieste. He has been sixteen years in Asia. He came with a Tartar from Scutari to Bagdad, thence to Persia, and has been twelve years here.'

¹ Illegible.

ners, their chiefs are generally mild, and, when their manners are bad, they are rustic, but never fierce.'

'*Peshawur, March 15.*—Rose late. After breakfast put a chain of intelligence to Persia in order, fixing writers at Cabul, Candahar, Herat, Yezd, Mushed, and Teheran; then thought over the present state of the Court, and the policy of staying or going, which has occupied me much of late. I began another letter to Lord Minto, but was interrupted by Mohammed Aly, who came to ask us to breakfast. Tiffed with Moollah Jaffer at Timoor Shah's garden. Meer Mohammed Aly is a Sheeraazee. He left his country seventeen years ago, about the time of the fall of the Zunds. He was a merchant, but was plundered by Futteh Khan and ruined. He praises Cabul highly, and says it is at least equal to Sheeraaz. He says the climate of Candahar is like that of his native country. Sent some wine by particular desire to Meerza Shereef Khan. Byat Oollah came with an overture on the part of Moollah Jaffer to us to rent Sind from the King for two lacs a month. He said it did not come from the King. I rejected it, saying, that if the French came we should give them money for nothing; but, at all events, we had no desire to increase our dominions.'

'*Peshawur, April 17, 1809.*

'Dear Strachey,—I enclose a letter for Adam, containing some account of our travels, and I can add little to it in that way except what Adam knows from the records; but you may wish to hear. We have been hammering at a defensive alliance against the French for these six weeks. It is at last got into shape, and gone to be sealed by the King; but I should not be surprised if it took another fortnight to get that done. After that I shall have nothing to do but to endeavour to remove the expectations which one agent or another has raised in the Ministers, and which it is difficult to get rid of without making them enemies. I have, however, made a good deal of progress in it, and have cleared off all unreasonable hopes that have been avowed; but I expect to find in time that promises have been made which I do not at

present in the least suspect. I fear we shall not be able to survey the country fully, as well on account of the present distractions as of the suspicions which the Court certainly entertain, though they have had the good sense and politeness not to show it. I even doubt whether we shall see Cabul; but even if we do, it will be all we shall do. The late events in Europe have quite altered our situation, and confined our prospects, and we can only hope to be common travellers. This country is not in a very good state. Balkh, Condoz, Herat, and Mekran, Seistan, Mooltan, Bahawul Khan and Dera Khan are scarce under the King but in name. Some of them contribute a few troops, and some a little money; but the King has no control in the interior of the country. Candahar and Cashmere are in rebellion, the former under Mahmood Shah, and the latter under the son of the late Vizier. The Eusufzyes, who inhabit the hills to the north of this, are almost independent. So the King has only Cabul, Peshawur, and a kind of authority over the hills, very short of entire command. He is incredibly poor, and, altogether, he is very weak. If he fails in taking Cashmere, Mahmood will take Cabul, which he already threatens, and there is an end of the King. If Cashmere is taken the King will be rich, Mahmood will disappear, and things will take a very different appearance. There have been chapawals of the Iraunees up to Kura, but they seem to be mere incursions. Let me hear from you often. I hope to see you at Moorshedabad before long, and to judge what sort of a Benedick you make.

‘Believe me, yours,

‘M. E.’

The embassy did not remain long in suspense about the events of the impending struggle. Within a fortnight after the date of the preceding letter the news arrived of the failure of the Cashmere expedition, on which the King's hopes were based.

‘April 29.—We heard from time to time of Ameer ool Moolk's success in Cashmere. Latterly, we heard of his carry-

ing two entrenchments, one after another, and of his being close to the Barra Moolla. At last we learned that he had got up a valley to an entry north of the Barra Moolla, and had arrived in the plains of Cashmere, where he found great plenty, after having suffered great hardships from famine. A battle was expected immediately, and little doubt entertained of the result. I was rather surprised at not receiving intelligence of the decision of the affair when, on the 3rd, Moolla Jaffer came to me and informed me of the defeat of Ameer ool Moolk, which was soon public in the city.'

‘About the same with the bad news from Cashmere a confirmation arrived of the taking of Cabul by Mahmood’s troops, of which we had before only heard rumours. The King’s affairs had appeared only a day before to be in the most prosperous train, and the report now was that the army in Cashmere was annihilated; that Akram Khan was missing, and that Muddad Khan had deserted; that Cabul was taken and plundered; that the enemy, enriched by the spoil and strengthened by reinforcements of Ghilzies and Cazzalbashees, were to advance on Peshawur five days after the taking of Cabul; that there were tribes in this neighbourhood armed and ready to start up as soon as Mahmood should move out; that the troops here were in such a state that they would probably mutiny; that the King was sending his family and jewels off to the hills, and would soon fly himself. Even Moollah Jaffer told me that he had been in great alarm; for, had Ameer ool Moolk really been missing, the King would have sent off his harem immediately. Entire confusion would have followed: we should have been attacked by the Khyberees and other plunderers without delay. In the midst of all this the city remained as quiet as the first day; people talked openly enough of the state of things; but nobody acted as if a revolution was at hand.’

‘Peshawur, May 6, 1809.

‘Since I last wrote Ameer ool Moolk has arrived, and I have seen him twice. He is a grave, sensible sort of man, plain

in his manners, and altogether different from what he is said to be, and what I fancy he really is, with his dependents. He made the warmest professions of anxiety to serve us, and added, after them all, that he hoped he was generally believed to be a man of his word, and described his defeat in Cashmere, which he ascribed to the treachery of his army. He seemed much troubled and in low spirits, but not unconvertible. The fear that is entertained of him was evident from the conduct of his attendants at both visits. When I went to him he was sitting on a terrace with Mohammed Ameer Khan Khyberee near him, and three others at a great distance. All the other people were standing—Meerza Khan in a doorway with a stick in his hand—and they were all dismissed with a word or two after we had sat a few minutes. When he was here Mirza Geraumee and the others sat with the utmost care to have their attitude, their clothes, &c., right, and spoke with the air of frightened men trying to be at ease. He was accompanied on his visit here by Fyzoollah Khan Fofuzye. On the night when Ameer ool Moolk came here a report went about that the pundit had been seized on his way to Cabul carrying letters, and perhaps money, to Shah Mahmood. This was soon improved by an addition that the King had determined to plunder us, and the order was just about to be issued. On this about 500 people collected round the doors, and people in all quarters of the town were getting their arms in order, till it was found to be a mistake; they separated without any violence or outrage. It was lucky that Akram Khan happened to come at the time he did, for if the crowd had stayed all night, any accident, a cry that the order had come, or any roughness on the part of our people, might have produced an attack upon us. Before we conclude with Ameer ool Moolk, I must mention that Geraumee Khan's servant came one day to get a microscope put in order for Ameer ool Moolk. He said he must do it well, for that Ameer ool Moolk frightened him out of his wits with his sour looks if anything went wrong. He said he would not serve him for a tomaun a day. It was a good Hazarah or Tartar-looking fellow that said all this. Mirza Geraumee says your not hearing

Ameer ool Moolk when he speaks to you is enough to put him in a passion. You must wait for hours and send in half a dozen times before you can get an audience of him. Everybody seems afraid to carry any message to him, and averse to being engaged in his concerns.

‘The solicitations for money have been left off for some days, and all that we have to do is to settle about our departure. Ameer ool Moolk wants us to remain at Attock, to which I will not agree.’

‘June 4.—This morning Akram Khan saw the escort exercise. The troops set off at three for a nice little plain north of the town, and we galloped after them as the day broke. Akram came at about six with several Khans, and about fifty horse. After looking at the line and the manual we dismounted and sat on a convenient hillock, where we were joined by many Dooraunees. Akram seemed quite plain with everybody, and no one seemed to treat him as so haughty a personage might be expected to be treated. They admired our regularity and discipline, and said: “If the Dooraunees had it, they would beat everything.” After which they, as usual, fell to deploring their dissensions. They were, as usual, plain and unaffected. Some of those present did not know the difference between a European and an Indian till it was pointed out to them. We rode home in company without any form about the *pas* till our roads separated.’

‘June 4.—The Cashmere army has come in; it amounts to 3,000 armed and mounted, and at least as many plundered. They are all full of gratitude to Atta Mohammed, and more attached to the other party than to this. The King, it is said, has issued twenty rupees a man to the mounted and ten to the dismounted, without distinction of Persian or Dooraunee. The Court now seems to have a good deal of confidence; but I think it fallacious. Even the common people speak of the army as entirely disaffected, and the soldiers themselves are loud in their censure of the Government. Besides this, there appears to be no plan determined on, and one chief in particular occupies a

prominent station, whom all appear to distrust. I fear Shah Shujah must fall, but (as the Mussulmans say) God is powerful, and there is no place where he shows his power with more irregularity than here. I have had a letter from Mahmood. I declined replying, but declared the neutrality of my Government. I was to have sent my heavy baggage to Attock; but the King now wishes me to stay as long as he does, or nearly so, and begins to hint about my going on to Cabul.'

A few days later the envoy took leave of the Court, and started on his return journey. The King spoke warmly and courteously of his desire to retain the mission, advising them to retire to some frontier place till his victory or defeat was assured, and then rejoin him or return to India, as suited their convenience. He had hoped to have carried them to Candahar or Herat. There is no reason to suppose that these were words of course. Some importance was attached to the presence at the Court of the representatives of the British power with which the Court of Cabul was now connected by a formal alliance. It was, however, now tottering to its fall, and a few days after the passage of the Indus the news reached the Court of Shah Shujah's defeat.

The following letter to his friend Strachey brings the narrative of the mission to a close:—

'[Private and Secret.]

'Camp at Pudreang, 12 coss S. of Rotas, July 20, 1809.

'Dear Strachey,—I ought by rights to begin and give you a long history of our proceedings since my last; but it is the toil of such a proceeding, together with a sense of its being a duty to undertake it, that has kept me from writing to anybody since I have been on this trip. I shall therefore only say that we left Peshawur just at the commencement of a revolution. The King moved out about the same time with us, and was met by Mahmood at Neemlah, while on the line of march. The surprise had the effect it usually has on Asiatic armies. The King, however, collected two or three hundred horse, chiefly khans and great men. Akram Khan (the Minister, and our great friend) charged into the thick of the enemy and was

killed ; but not till he had run his lance through one of their great chiefs. The King was defeated and fled to the hills, but in about a week returned to Peshawur, of which he has still possession. The enemy cannot get at him, as the Khyberees are on his side. We came by Attock to Hussan Abdaul, where we stayed ten days or a fortnight. It is a delightful valley, watered by clear streams, on the banks of which are willows, wild grapes (or grapes grown wild), quince, apple, and plum trees, watercress, sedges, rushes, brambles (those that bear blackberries), &c. There are also fine cypresses and sycamores, with several Hindustanee trees, much admired by visitors from the Peshawur side, but not very interesting to us. We then came to Rawul Pindee, in the Sikh country. We stayed there some time, were overtaken by the harem, which came there for safety, and had an interview with Shah Zemaun. This interesting character is all that you would figure him—handsome, manly, and dignified, apparently depressed by his misfortunes, but not broken or dejected. His eyes are not so disfigured as to affect the expression of his countenance. It was a melancholy thing to see Shah Zemaun blind and a fugitive in the very country into which he had so often led victorious armies. Even the Sikhs were struck with this. They, at least Jewun Sing, the chief of Pindee, have long been connected with Shah Shujah, and behave well to his family. We have been marching on since then rather faster than one might expect in the rains, and are to reach the Hydaspes on the day after to-morrow. We had a row in getting through a defile yesterday, which was unluckily rendered important by the death of a camel-man, and by Captain Pitman, who commands the escort, being shot through the arm. He is doing well. This is almost the only disturbance we have had in all our travels. It was with people who lined the hills, and fired and rolled down stones to stop my progress.

‘I am not sure whether we shall go to Lahore or to Patancote, where the Padshah (so the Sikhs call Runjeet) is at present engaged in preparations and negotiations for the purpose of obtaining possession of Cote Caungrah (or Nagarcote), which place is besieged by the Raja of Nepal. If I am not

forbid, which I do not apprehend, I shall go straight to Calcutta on my return, and hope to see you on my way. At present I am going on quietly enough for this gloomy season; but even marching does not keep off the blue devils. I have, however, written a pamphlet against them, to which I was about to put the finishing stroke by proving that they rendered their victims incapable of great actions, when I stumbled on the following extract from Aristotle, which I send you, as you were once a blue devil, though you have now left off trade: Πάντες ὅσοι περιττοὶ γέγονασιν ἄνδρες, ἢ κατὰ φιλοσοφίαν ἢ πολιτείαν ἢ ποιήσιν ἢ τέχνας, φαίνονται μελανχολικοὶ ὄντες. "All who have become eminent, either in philosophy, politics, poetry, or the arts, appear to have been subject to the blue devils."³

The mission to Cabul was now virtually closed, though the name was kept up for some months, to enable the envoy and his coadjutors to prepare their report on the countries they had visited. He returned depressed at the failure of the sanguine hopes with which he started some six months before; and he never, in his letters or journal, reverted to this period of his career without some expression of dissatisfaction. The feeling was probably heightened by an incident to which I must now refer. The Dooraunee Government, pressed by their urgent wants, made overtures to the Indian Government, which might have proved tempting under other circumstances, to raise money on the security of the revenues of Sind. The first proposal amounted to no more than ordinary methods of Eastern Governments, of granting assignments of the revenues of provinces, either for military service, or to bankers for advances of money. The proposal was that the Indian Government should 'rent Sind,' and did not necessarily convey a cession of sovereign rights, though it involved complete independence of administration.

The proposal was summarily rejected, and the incident is

³ The passage forms the opening of one of the Problems, commencing interrogatively, Διὰ τί πάντες ὅσοι, &c. The melancholy (black bile) treated of by Aristotle was held to be the source of passion and violence.

very briefly noticed in the journal. Somewhat later (the exact date does not appear) the subject was renewed, and a proposal was made for a complete cession of the right to the territory, in consideration of an annual payment. In the mean time intelligence reached Peshawur that our relations with the rulers of Sind were embroiled, and that the envoy sent to Hyderabad had left the country, and that a friendly reception had been given to an agent representing Persia and the dreaded French influence.

Mr. Elphinstone now thought it incumbent on him to bring this proposal to the notice of the Governor-General. He had been informed, in his instructions, that the Government had received intelligence that the French, in concert with Persia, had extended their intrigues to that country, that the chiefs of Sind had, in the preceding year, despatched Vakeels to the Court of Persia to solicit its support against the King of Cabul. There seemed some probability that an invading army would advance by that route, and the political condition of that province would, it was thought, favour an attack on British dominions. While, therefore, the envoy to the Affghan Court was especially cautioned not to pledge the aid of our power in support of the claims of the Affghans upon Sind, excepting only in the case of a positive confederacy between the Government of Sind and the State of Persia under the influence of France, he was told that the Governor-General in Council deemed it probable that the course of events would compel us to support the King's claims by force of arms.

Mr. Elphinstone, deeming that the contingency here provided for had arrived, or was near at hand, thought it his duty to submit the King's proposal to the Government of Calcutta, alluding, at the same time, to the departure of the British envoy from Hyderabad, and assuming therefore that the proposal might fall in with the views of the Government. This proposal was accompanied by another suggestion, equally important, and which may be regarded as Mr. Elphinstone's own. A moderate subsidy would, he thought, give the King such a preponderance over his rivals as to render his throne for the

time stable, and bind him to our interests against any invasion from the West ; and this, if combined with the cession of Sind, would give some vigour to our ally, without diminishing our own resources, and the whole proposal would have the effect of shutting up the southern route to India, while it afforded the means of defence on the northern.

Mr. Elphinstone, in making this proposal, was quite alive to the objections that might be urged against it, and he stated them more forcibly than they were afterwards put by the Government itself. First and foremost he insisted that the Government must be satisfied of its practicability and justice. Secondly, it was to be kept in mind that the danger from France was temporary, and the report of their recent reverses in Spain might dispose the Government to consider any danger from that quarter as at an end. But, lastly, we were to bear in mind that, in a Government constituted like the Affghan monarchy, support to the sovereign might make us unpopular with the people, and defeat the very cause we took in hand.

These are very remarkable words. It is strange to find in the inner recesses of the India Office these words of prudence addressed to the Government of India when the alarm against a French invasion was at its height, so perfectly apposite to the state of things which existed in 1839.

When the Indian Government, misled by the analogies of our alliances with the native states of India, attempted to apply the same principles of military control which had been so successful in establishing our power in India to the wild mountain tribes of Affghanistan, Mr. Elphinstone's good sense enabled him to foretell that the step would prove as false politically as strategically. I well remember the force with which he expressed these views at the time, and though his opinion did not carry its proper weight during the first success of the expedition, it was vividly recalled to my mind when the course of events showed the soundness of his views. Whatever strength Shah Shujah might derive from his own tribe and the influence of his family would, he said, be lost by the introduction of a foreign army, and our hold of the country would be miserably

insecure. To defend Affghanistan against an invasion from the West it was essential, he contended, that we should come in as allies and not as conquerors. Such were Mr. Elphinstone's opinions in 1839, and they were but an echo of those which he entertained thirty years before.

To return from this digression. This bold proposal, thus submitted to the Government, though guarded with every consideration of prudence and justice, brought on the young envoy a severe reproof. The plan of subsidising the Cabul monarchy, which in recent times has been carried out under successive Governments, appeared rash and of uncertain advantage. The Secretary to the Government was instructed to dwell on the evils of the Indian subsidiary system generally, and to point out that the Governments of India and of Cabul were too widely separated to apply to that remote state the principle of our alliances with the States of India. In an emergency the policy might be sound; but no reliance could be placed on such an alliance when the immediate danger had passed away. The mission had been beneficial in removing prejudices and in establishing cordiality. With this we should rest satisfied. The negotiations should close with the treaty already framed, and the mission should then return.

These views were emphatic and just. What follows is harsh and inconsistent. Whatever might be the King's claims on Sind, the territory was virtually independent, and he could transfer only a nominal sovereignty. The Government would be disinclined under any circumstance to enter on a project of such extent. 'But, in fact,' so the despatch proceeded, 'considerations intimately connected with those fundamental principles of political discretion, as well as of political morality, by which alone the true honour and prosperity of the British empire in the East can be permanently maintained, would, under any circumstances, oppose the adoption of that project; while its practicability and success are too doubtful to warrant the attempt, even if it were unopposed by the dictates of prudent policy and the obligations of political justice.'

It is not very clear whether this austere reproof, which may

be taken as a specimen of Anglo-Indian verbiage, was to apply to the whole project or only to that which regarded Sind. The reference to high moral principles of course applies to the latter, and was so understood by the envoy, who replied submissively and firmly to the imputation that was cast on his proposal. Before quoting his own statement it should be remarked that the Talpooree family, who were the chiefs of a large warrior tribe in Sind, had thrown off the Dooraunee yoke about thirty years before, and, after alternate successes and reverses, acquired a quasi independence, on the condition of accepting their investiture from the Court of Cabul, and paying an annual tribute. In the troubled times which followed, this tribute was paid very irregularly, and only eight lacs out of thirty due had been paid. Their political position rendered them open to foreign influences, and the British Government, on the first alarm, sent missions to the Ameers, as they did to Cabul and Lahore.

It is evident, therefore, that the Government regarded Sind as the probable point of attack by a Franco-Persian army, and it seems inconceivable that the Government should have rebuked Mr. Elphinstone for a suggestion that in the event of the Government taking steps to reduce the province to submission, it should rather be under an authority ceded by the Court of Cabul than as an ally of that sovereign. In the event of a French army advancing on Sind, even stronger measures would have been justifiable, and we should not have waited the result of negotiations with Cabul before taking steps to defend our territory and attacking any Power allied with our enemies.

I now give Mr. Elphinstone's own reply :—

‘The expediency of accepting of the cession of Sind has clearly been removed by the change which has taken place in the state of affairs, and the consequent alteration of the views of the Government; and I have to beg the Right Honourable the Governor-General's excuse for having at any time submitted a plan founded on such imperfect information. I was induced to do so by the consideration that the slowness of communication between Peshawur and Calcutta rendered it

necessary to lose no time in pointing out the disposition of the Court of Cabul with respect to Sind, and the advantages which might be derived from it. I trust that the following explanation will make it appear that the plan which I proposed did not involve any step at all inconsistent with the strictest principles of political morality. When I had the honour to address to the Governor-General my letter No. 12, I had not the same information respecting the state of Europe which I now possess, and I was very far from considering any event that had taken place in that quarter of the globe as fatal to the French invasion of India. I understood that the chiefs of Sind had given a cordial welcome to an agent of France and Persia, while they had received the British envoy with coldness and distrust. I had also received intelligence (which has proved erroneous) that Mr. Smith had arrived at Hyderabad, and had been immediately dismissed. I had no doubt that the views of the chiefs of Sind were entirely repugnant to an alliance, or anything like the terms proposed to them ; and I conceived the time to be fast approaching which had been anticipated in the 67th and 68th paragraphs of your despatch, when the submission of the chiefs of Sind to the King of Persia would render it just and necessary for our Government to assist in reducing them into complete subjection to the King of Cabul. Considering an attack on Sind to be in the event of certain probable contingencies determined, I addressed the Governor-General chiefly with a view to show that it was more for the benefit of both states that we should take Sind for ourselves than for the King of Cabul. Though my principal object was to enumerate the advantages we should derive from the possession of Sind, I was aware that our obtaining them depended on the conduct of the chiefs of Sind, and on the facility with which we could occupy their country, if the state of our relations with them rendered it necessary to attack them ; but with these subjects I was unacquainted, and was obliged to content myself with alluding to them, and referring to his Lordship's better information. It did not fall within the range of this discussion to examine the King of Cabul's right to Sind, and from what I

was in the habit of hearing daily, it did not occur to me to question his title. There seemed little or no difference in point of form between the manner in which the King held Sind and that in which he holds the countries most subject to his control, nor is there any real difference, except that he cannot remove the Governor, and that more of the revenue is withheld on false pretences (of inundation, &c.) than in the other provinces. The King does not appear ever to have renounced his right to the full sovereignty of Sind. His march in that direction was, professedly at least, for the purpose of settling the province, and the reduction of Sind is as commonly spoken of as that of Cashmere. On the other hand, I understood the chiefs of Sind to acknowledge the King's sovereignty in the fullest manner, and to pretend no right to the countries they govern, except what they derive from the King's Rukhum. These facts would have rendered it necessary for us to attend to the King of Cabul's claims in any arrangement we might make for Sind; but it was on the supposed transfer of their allegiance to Persia that I conceived our right of interference to be founded. I have said so much on this subject, because I am very anxious to show the Governor-General that I did not intend to recommend a wanton attack on Sind for mere purposes of aggrandisement.'

It seems unnecessary to pursue the subject further. The Government of Lord Minto acted under the belief that the danger of a French invasion was imminent; but when the alarm subsided it rebuked the suggestions of their envoy as uncalled for. Mr. Elphinstone's justification rests on the instructions he received and pursued when the panic was at its highest. If it was immoral to obtain a cession of the claims of the Court of Cabul as proposed by Mr. Elphinstone, it was equally so to attack the princes of Sind to enforce those claims, as suggested by the Indian Government. Either proceeding would be unwarrantable, except under a sense of imminent danger.⁴

⁴ My attention was directed to this subject by the following passage in Sir W. Kaye's life of Mr. Elphinstone (*Lives of Indian Officers*, i. p. 241): 'Whilst waiting thus at Peshawur, it appeared that we might turn the existing rela-

Thirty years later we attacked the same country in support of the claims of the same sovereign under an alarm at the advancing power of Russia. In a conversation with Mr. Elphinstone on the justice of the war of 1839 I endeavoured to defend the action of our Government on the plea which I have urged above, that we were justified in self-defence in seizing a territory that would otherwise fall into the hands of an enemy, and would thus bring that enemy to our very door. Mr. Elphinstone admitted the force of the plea, but denied that we were threatened with a danger that would justify such an act in this case, and treated with ridicule the alarm that was expressed at the progress of the Shah of Persia. The same principles should guide us in judging the conduct of our Government in 1809. The reader will judge whether Mr. Elphinstone's suggestion went one tittle beyond a contingency which he was expressly instructed to keep in view.

Among Mr. Elphinstone's papers I find a memorandum on the invasion of India from the North-west, which has some bearing on the preceding remarks, as it shows that in his mature views he held to the expediency of cultivating more intimate relations with the King of Cabul than were in the views of Lord Minto's Government. The subject is one of ever-recurring interest, and the reader will be interested in seeing how this question was viewed by one of our leading statesmen in 1811. The paper is without date, but bears the endorsement in pencil, 'Probably written in 1811 and 1812.' There is no reason to suppose that it ever formed the base of a State paper.

tions between England and Cabul to profitable account for the future defence of our empire, by entering into a compact for the cession of Shah Shujah's doubtfully acquired Sind provinces to the British Government, in return for certain money payments. It was a spasm of youthful diplomatic energy, to which, doubtless, in his maturer years, he did not look back with much satisfaction. The suggestion was scouted in Calcutta.' The expression, 'doubtfully acquired Sind provinces,' seems a piece of careless writing, for there was no more doubt as to the conquest of Sind than as to the other acquisitions of Ahmed Shah Dooraunee. Sir W. Kaye quotes very fully Mr. Elphinstone's letter of explanation; but I scarcely think he could have read the first despatch when he penned his sarcastic commentary on the youthful indiscretion of the envoy. The candour with which Mr. Elphinstone stated the objections that might be urged against his proposal was worthy of his mature years.

The first and largest part of the memorandum consists of a review of the physical and other obstacles which an invader would have to encounter in a march to India, first and foremost being the difficulties of the country, so ill calculated to supply a large army. It describes the more or less desert character of the country which divides Persia from the Cabul territories, except in the points where the Persian part of Khorassan joins on to that belonging to Cabul and Seistan; and this is followed up by a detailed account of the territory subject to the Affghan sovereign, and a sketch of the geography of Beloochistan, and an enumeration of the passes which lead to the Indus. It concludes with a description of the plain of Peshawur, a note on the Indus, and some remarks on the character of the Punjab. The conclusion to which the survey leads is that the most vulnerable route lay through Sind.

‘It is necessary,’ he adds, ‘to make one remark on the south of the desert, which is not included in this sketch. I think if Sind were friendly to the enemy it would be easy for him to send columns of troops in small divisions from Kerman through the southern part of the desert into that country; and even if Sind were hostile to them, if not occupied by force, it would be possible for the French to send troops enough at once to get a footing in it, and keep their ground till reinforced by fresh divisions. I am, however, but slightly informed about the south on either side of the Indus.

‘The next road to the North is on the map, and leads to Skikarpoor. It is in all respects the best of the whole.

‘I shall now mention the manner in which the French are likely to get through the countries I have been describing, noticing incidentally what can be done to impede them, and finally I shall say what occurs to me on the method of resisting them in their attack on India. To save the trouble of continually qualifying what I have to say, I shall remark now that it is on this last head that I think myself most likely to fall into errors, and that I beg you to give me your opinion, without paying the least attention to mine. As we can only send money and stores to Persia, and the Russians can bring

armies close to the capital, I think there can be little doubt that they and their allies will be able to frighten that Court into their views, procure its assistance in supplying their armies, and set out with a large body of the cavalry of Persia from the frontier of that kingdom. We should then require the aid of the Affghans and Beloches. If we are not vigilant and decided the French will be able to conciliate, intimidate, or divide each of these nations, and to march through their countries, though even then they would find it difficult. If we keep the ascendancy we might, with the assistance of the Beloches (who are in nominal dependence on the Affghans, and have a real union with them in interests and inclinations), shut up the desert entirely. The French would then be left only the roads through Seistan and the Dooraunee country. If we had a strong and cordial Government at Cabul, it would be possible to persuade a great part of the inhabitants of the Dooraunee country to retire into the hills on the right and left of their usual abodes, from which they might harass the armies, and cut off the supplies of the French and Persians. With respect to Seistan, which is now, in fact, independent of Cabul in every’

There is a page missing in the manuscript, which proceeds, still referring to the masters of the hill country:—

‘Supposing them, contrary to all appearance, to be so disposed to favour the enemy, they could keep the French out of their respective countries. If the enemy had possession of them he would set up another Indian empire close to ours, and attack us immediately, or wait the result of his intrigues with our enemies and allies, if not with our native troops, as he thought best. Nor can there be a doubt that the appearance of a French army on the Sutlege, or on the frontiers of Cutch and of Joudhpoor, would have a very different effect on the natives from that which would be produced by his arrival at Shikarpoor or at Peshawur. A better line of conduct to be adopted by our Government seems to be the following: To resume our former policy, and seize every opportunity of returning to the situation from which we voluntarily receded in 1805, and to proceed in the same spirit till we had established an efficient control over

every state on this side of the Indus. I see no difficulty in effecting this, except what arises from our treaties, which I would not take a step, directly or indirectly, to infringe; but I think that it requires pains and sacrifices on our part to preserve those treaties which are so hurtful to our interests, and that, by letting things take their natural course, we should soon get rid of them. Holkar's Government has expired, and its treaties along with it. Nothing prevents our making a subsidiary treaty with the Raja of Berar. Sindia would soon fall either into our arms or those of Meer Khan; and his surrender of his claims on the Rajpoots might be made the condition of his obtaining peace in the one case, or our alliance in the other. The Rajpoots are continually pressing Seton, who as continually urges the Government to make subsidiary treaties with them; and if our treaties with Sindia and Holkar were annulled, we should find it greatly for our advantage to gratify them.

‘If this were done we should have recovered our former position, and would be far more likely than now to persuade the Sikhs and Talpoorees of Sind to join in a real alliance. Runjeet Sing's sincere friendship would be of the greatest value to us; but if he quarrelled with us within a year or two, we should be able to overturn his Government (which is foreign to the country), and establish a control over the ancient chiefs of the Punjab, who are Runjeet's natural enemies, and whom he is now employed in destroying. As for the Talpoorees, I would greatly prefer a just war with them to a treaty. Their country could be attacked from Guzerat, from Joudhpoor, and by sea, and we should be sure of whatever co-operation could be afforded us by the King of Cabul or the Beloches. [If we attempted]⁵ a close connection with them we should be obliged to support their usurpations, and that would prevent a cordial union with the three last-mentioned Powers. With the possession of Sind you could be sure of the Beloches, you could render the southern route entirely impassable, and the one to Shikarpore very difficult, and you would only have one point

⁵ The passages included in brackets are supplied conjecturally where the original is torn or defaced

(Shikarpore) to defend, which would cover the whole of the south and of the centre of India. In the north you would have fifty or sixty miles of the course of the Indus to defend (I mean that about Attock ; for I should scarce think the French would bring any great force by any route between Attock and Shikarpore, although it may be possible for them to do so). It would be unpleasant to have the rivers of the Punjab in your rear ; but if well managed, this would surely be a better position than one on the Sutlege, which is fordable at all points during a great part of the year. You would, of course, be obliged to have other [armies to maintain our supremacy] in the interior of India, and the whole would require a very large army ; but I have heard of no plan that would not require a vast army, and indeed without one we shall have no chance at all, except that of the French not coming.

‘For our foreign policy, I think we ought to choose between Persia and Cabul, it being impossible to keep equally with both. If [we cannot bring the King to defend his country] we might as well not risk our money, our reputation, and our other alliances by attempting it, but consider Persia as a secondary object, and take decidedly to Cabul. We might then give the King money enough to make him an efficient ally, without spending more than we now give the King of Persia for his temporary goodwill, and we could turn the whole of our attention and resources to the defence of the noble frontier formed by the desert, the mountains, and the Indus.’

CHAPTER VIII.

POONA, 1810-1815.

RETURN TO CALCUTTA—APPOINTED RESIDENT AT POONA—THE VOYAGE—GOA—BOMBAY—RESOLVES TO PUBLISH ON CABUL—SOUTHERN JAGEERDARS—THEIR RELATION TO THE PESHWA—MR. ELPHINSTONE'S PROPOSALS—HISTORY OF THE SETTLEMENT—CORRESPONDENCE WITH W. ERSKINE—BABER'S MEMOIRS—PERSONAL NOTES AND MEMORANDA—WANDERINGS IN THE POONA TERRITORY.

THE homeward journey from the Affghan Court was made very leisurely. The Government seems to have been unwilling to bring the embassy to a close up to the date of its leaving Peshawur, and the envoy did not receive his letter of recall till several weeks later. Indeed, from a letter to his friend Strachey, it appears doubtful whether in the following April the Governor-General had relinquished the idea of maintaining diplomatic relations with the states on the north-west frontier. He crossed the Sutlege in September, and from that he went to Delhi and remained in Upper India till the following June, when he was ordered to Calcutta. In a letter to his sister reporting his return to the Presidency he says: 'I had been two years and a half away, in which time I had gone five thousand miles.'

Shortly after his arrival at Calcutta he was appointed to the Residency at Poona, and embarked for his new destination in the following January. No letter is extant referring to this period. He lived in a circle of intimate friends, his usual correspondents; and of his correspondence with the members of his family there is not a trace. His journal was not resumed till he was fairly at sea, and I gather from it that he was occupied with his report to the end of his stay.

The chapter in Mr. Elphinstone's life on which I am now entering is of historical interest, comprising the memorable

events which led to the fall of the Peshwa's government, the conquest of the country, and the re-organisation of the government under Mr. Elphinstone's immediate superintendence. Fortunately the materials at my command increase as I proceed. His journal was kept, with occasional intermission, from this till he retired from the service, and contains more frequent reference to public events than was usual in the early volumes. It also gives a very interesting account of his anxieties during a crisis of almost romantic interest. His correspondence, too, was increased, and much of it, especially during the latter portion of his residence at Poona, has been preserved. From these materials, and from his public despatches, I am enabled to offer a more full and consecutive narrative of this part of his career.

The journal, to which I now refer, commences with an expression of regret that he had discontinued the practice for a whole year. It then proceeds:—

‘I spent the last days in Calcutta in completing things connected with my mission and with my report, and in visiting with the Stracheys, going to the Bullers, where E. Strachey and Mrs. S. lived. As I enjoyed Calcutta much less this time than formerly, I left it with less regret. Still, when passing the Chouringhee road the last day, I—

“Looked on stream and tree and plain,
As what I ne’er might see again.”

‘I went on board my pinnace on January 7. Elliot came near in his pleasure-boat, and we took him on board. At last Adam came, and we sailed. We went on board the “Mornington” at Kyd’s Dock, to show it to Moollah Nujeeb, and we then put ashore Elliot and R. Strachey. There remained Adam, Mr. Martyn,¹ Anderson, and I.’

¹ The Rev. Henry Martyn, the Indian chaplain and missionary, was on his way to Arabia in search of health. There are some allusions to this voyage and his meeting with Elphinstone in Sir W. Kaye’s memoir (*Lives of Indian Officers*, vol. i. p. 363). Martyn also kept a journal, which contains some reference to his conversation with his fellow-traveller: ‘Generally so sick that I could do nothing but sit on the poop. Mr. E[lfhinstone] kindly entertained

The newly appointed Resident started for his destination on board the 'Humoody,' an Arab coasting vessel.

It seems strange to find this portion of the Indian trade in foreign hands. The French cruisers had latterly been very active, and the expedition to the Mauritius was planned for the extirpation of this impediment to our trade in the Eastern seas. But, in truth, the East India Company did not condescend to supply these branches of commerce. Strong in their monopoly, they kept up powerful fleets to maintain their trading connection with India and China; and those who, like Mr. Elphinstone, hesitated to enter on a tedious journey across the peninsula, had to take advantage of any craft that was at hand.

'July 10.—In the evening the pilot, Mr. Sinclair, a modest, well-behaved young man, left us, and I may now mention our arrangements for the voyage. This *glab* (*sic*) belongs to an Arab merchant of Muscat. The Nakhoda, an Abyssinian slave. The crew are Arabs, Beloches of Muscat (with one or two of Mekran), Abyssinians, and other Africans, including a Nubian and some Persians of the southern coast. These last, and the Beloches, are more like men of the wild Affghan tribes of the south than anything else. They are rather worse looking and more Indian in their dress; the Arabs are much the same. They seem good kind of fellows, and are stout, but lazy, noisy, and insubordinate. Our passengers are:—a prettyish Miss

me with information about India, with the politics of which he has such opportunities of making himself acquainted. For he has been with Holkar and Sindia a good deal. Holkar he describes as a little spitfire, &c.' The only occasion on which Elphinstone met Holkar was after his victory over Sindia and the Peshwa in 1802. Mr. Elphinstone told me that his appearance was mean, and he compared him to a Hindustanee syce or groom. In a letter to his friend Strachey, giving an account of his voyage, there is the following reference to his fellow-traveller:—

'We have in Mr. Martyn an excellent scholar, and one of the mildest, cheer-fullest, and pleasantest men I ever saw. He is extremely religious, and disputes about the faith with the Nakhoda, but talks on all subjects, sacred and profane, and laughs and makes others laugh as heartily as he could do if he were an infidel. We have people who can speak twenty-five languages (not apiece) in the ship. I am reading several things, including *Polybus* and Scott's *Dryden*, and go on capitally. All this is to get you to seize opportunities of writing me when you have nothing to say, as I have done to you.'

Maclean; a fat black, Mr. Pereira, descended of a family of converted Brahmins of Bassein, as are his connections, the rich Baretto and Sir Miguel de Sousa. The captain is country born, and has never been in England (I believe). He has been a good deal in the Gulf, and was shipwrecked on the coast of Africa, and prisoner at the Isle of France. He is good-humoured, has a good memory, and is naturally sharp; but his education, of course, is moderate, and he clips the King's English beyond Mrs. Slipslop. His wife is cheerful and good-humoured. Mr. Martyn has proved a far better companion than I reckoned on, though my expectations were high. His zeal is unabated, but it is not troublesome, and he does not press disputes and investigate creeds. He is familiar with Greek and Latin, understands French and Italian, speaks Persian and Arabic, has translated the Scriptures into Hindustani, and is translating the Old Testament from Hebrew. He was an eminent mathematician, even at Cambridge; and, what is of more consequence, he is a man of good sense and taste, and simple in his manners and character, and cheerful in his conversation.

The vessel made a short stay at Ceylon, and again at Goa. Of his halt at the latter place there is a very full account. The passengers were invited ashore by Captain Shuyler, the British envoy to the Portuguese Government, to be present at a ball the same evening. Here he met a mixed society of Portuguese and English, and found himself unexpectedly surrounded by many friends whom he had known in General Wellesley's camp. One of these informed him that he had been abused for a doctor at Assye. 'The evening went off delightfully between talking of old times and observing the new faces among the English and the manners of the Portuguese.' The next morning he started off with Mr. Martyn and three other gentlemen to visit the memorials of Vasco de Gama, Albuquerque, and the tomb of Xavier. Everything they met was ecclesiastical, including the Inquisition, which was still maintained, though autos da fe had been discontinued since the reign of Don John, sixty or seventy years previously. English-

men were not admitted to these mysterious abodes, and, therefore, that building passed unvisited.

The churches were filled with legendary pictures, and with the usual incentives to Roman Catholic devotion; yet the impression which the place made on Mr. Elphinstone's mind was far from repelling. 'We went up,' he writes, 'to the top of this church—belonging to a monastery of the Augustines—and into the belfry. The view appeared to me to surpass any I had seen in India: a fine river winding through a plain, partly cultivated, partly covered with wood, and partly flooded with water, rising into little heights, on which were churches and monasteries, as there were in some places on the plains; and beyond all this the mountains, high, dim, and blue, made the front view. In the foreground were churches and monasteries close to us. To the right were low hills, bare, except where there were cocoa groves in the hollows, and bushes and low trees on the brows. All was silent. No lay edifice nor worldly passenger was to be seen, and the whole inspired a sentiment of contemplation and repose. I longed for six months' solitary study in this church.'

Some of the pictures on the walls interested the visitors. 'I was most taken,' he says, 'with one representing St. Augustine, surrounded by a representative of each of the orders which have sprung from him. They are all in their habits, and among them were Knights Templar, Knights of Malta, Teutonic knights, and other knights of religious orders. They have all the names over them; indeed, every picture we saw had a description and narrative illustrative of its subject.'

The journal breaks off abruptly with the account of the visit to Goa, and was not resumed until the middle of the following June. During this time he had settled down to his new duties at the Peshwa's Court. The journal during this and the following years is kept very irregularly. It contains very graphic descriptions of his different excursions in the Peshwa's territories. There is much of his reading, the progress of his work on the Affghans, of field sports, and the state of his health. On this last head there is more than usual in this

volume. The return of hot weather brought with it suffering and fits of depression, against which he struggled manfully, but to which he refers again and again. I shall have occasion to refer to these sad passages in his journal from time to time.

It was fortunate that his public duties were not at first very onerous, and allowed him to undertake a literary enterprise, and to this he soon applied himself. The plan of life, which is given in some detail, was to ride ten to twenty miles in the morning, to do the *kusrut*,² apply to public business and private correspondence from about ten to two, then lunch on a few sandwiches and figs and a glass of water, after which a siesta of half an hour. 'I then begin to read or examine people about the Affghans, on the subject of whom I am almost determined to publish. In the evening I used to drive out; I now do the *kusrut* a second time. I dine on a few potatoes and one or two glasses of claret and water, and then, after reading for some time, go to sleep at eleven.'

In this way he had got through much miscellaneous reading, which is noted in detail. The entries include a short critique on the 'Hecuba' of Euripides, and notes on many books on Italy, to which he had turned after the perusal of 'Corinne.' He found a companion in his classical studies in a young medical man, whose name, Jeffreys, recurs frequently in the subsequent entries, and who is described, in a letter to a friend, as 'the child of fancy.' They read together Lucan and Lucretius. I quote in full two specimens of his criticism, (1) on Volney's 'Travels in Syria and Egypt'; (2) on Sir George Staunton's account of Lord Macartney's embassy to China in 1792:—

'The first of these books gave me infinite satisfaction. It leaves nothing untold that is important. The country, the inhabitants, their manners, their ways of thinking, are seized with the happiest selection, and presented to the reader in such a manner as to place the people before his eyes. Volney is full of reflections, and he refers them to a philosophic system, and forms new principles by generalising them. Yet they are always (as far as I can judge) fairly and fully stated, without bias to the

² One of the bodily exercises in which he engaged.

author's hypothesis. In his description of the wandering tribes I often recognise the Affghans, and this I consider as a proof of his veracity, since similarity of situations will produce similarity of manners and customs. If he has any prejudice, it is that of aversion to the Turks. Yet, perhaps, his observation was more correct than ours. We get used to seeing human nature debased, and every little sign of elevation of character which we afterwards observe is apt to strike us agreeably; but on arriving from Europe, one fairly compares and contrasts the state of society in Asia with that of the countries one has left, and it is needless to say how hideous Asia must appear. Volney falls into a mistake to which we in India are very subject, that of thinking all Asia the same, because its different parts resemble each other in some striking particulars. The worst part of his book is that which is given to conjectures about ancient history. Nothing can be worse than Volney's etymology. On the whole, this is the best book of travels I ever read.

'*August 17.*—I have finished the last two volumes of Staunton's "Embassy." The first volume does not relate to China. I found the book interesting and instructive, though this might be owing to its being the first book about China that I ever read. Sir G. is a man of science, and is enabled to give very satisfactory accounts of many particulars that would have escaped an ordinary traveller. His account of the Chinese language and character, for instance, is excellent. His knowledge, however, sometimes leads him to employ technical terms to such a degree, that one could read Herodotus's account of the Tartars with less help from a dictionary than Sir G.'s account of China. So much for Sir G.'s book. Of China and the Chinese it is more difficult to form an opinion. Sir G. is evidently very partial to them; but his partiality appears more in his language than in his statements. One is, however, inclined to suspect that he took much less notice of the bad parts of what he saw than of the good. Oriental profligacy and misery are sometimes seen through the decent and stately garments in which Sir G. has clothed them. One is struck with the resemblance which the Chinese bear in some respects

to the Indians. The similarity of their agriculture and some of their customs is very strong; but if we compare them with that people we are struck with some remarkable differences. The activity of the Chinese, their improvements in the arts of life, and the remarkable industry and intelligence of the lower orders, which are perhaps the most obvious of these, lead us rather to compare them to Europeans; but there we find a still greater dissimilarity in their confined views, the servility of their minds, their want of boldness in thought and action, their deficiency in honour, and in most of the virtues, in the inferiority of genius among the upper classes, and the little progress which they have made in purely speculative sciences, in which indeed they are far inferior to the Hindoos.

‘The chief points of dissimilarity between the Chinese and Indians on the one hand, and with the Europeans on the other, may, I think, be traced to two principal causes—their long possession of the art of printing, and the energy and permanence of the despotism under which they live, and which controls every action of their lives.

‘The effects of printing, by the facility which it affords of communicating and preserving discoveries, is too obvious to require being dwelt on. Almost every man in China can read, and every man (by Sir G.’s account) can find innumerable books to instruct him in his own calling, or to interest him, from their relation to his condition in life. Such a state of things must have greatly promoted civilisation, and, one would think, must have raised it to the pitch which the same cause has in a great measure enabled it to attain in Europe. But this progress is checked by an external force.

‘The despotism has subsisted in full vigour for a period unequalled by any other government. Its possessors have thus acquired a degree of experience, and gradually adopted a system of interference and minute control, of which there are few examples. At the same time the rulers have partaken largely in the advantages derived from the press, and have also been enabled to use that powerful engine for their own purposes.

‘The power of the government in China is not opposed by

any of the checks which are found in other despotisms, however absolute. There is no nobility. There seems to be no priesthood in the general religion of the country. There are no hereditary officers of government, like the Zemindars of India, nor elective magistrates like the Mulliks and Kedkhoodahs of Cabul and Persia. The power of the Emperor pervades the whole country undiverted and uncontrolled.

‘Such a government may well be expected to restrain the speculations, and in time to limit the mental powers of those who live under it. The results of these causes may be very plainly perceived; the effects of printing appear in the excellence which the Chinese have reached in all the lower branches of civilisation; but the check imposed by the government prevents their ascending one step among the higher branches. Manufactures, public works, systems of gardening, plays, and novels abound; but throughout the whole there seems to be little originality or attempt at innovation, and seldom more than an approach to excellence. They have also moral and political essays; but the use of the former is lost for want of an independent public opinion, which would stimulate the virtues and bridle the vices. The latter probably refer exclusively to the particular system already adopted in China.

‘There are some other causes which may probably be as powerful as those I have mentioned, though their effects are less certain, or less open to observation. The variable climate of China, by multiplying the wants of the inhabitants, may increase their industry and ingenuity; and the long tranquillity they have enjoyed has certainly afforded opportunity for the employment of those qualities. The nature of their written language may possibly have no small effect in narrowing their talents and fixing their opinions. This may perhaps be the original cause of the permanency of their government and institutions.

‘With most nations, written as well as spoken languages have but a loose connection with the ideas which they indicate. With the Chinese the written character represents the idea; and all complex ideas are represented by characters composed

of symbols representing the principal simple ideas of which the complex one is supposed to be made up.

‘An Englishman may use the word “king” according to his own notion—in Cromwell’s time for a “tyrant;” and in William’s for a “father of his country;” but if in China the symbol which represents a king be made up of the signs for “power” and “goodness,” and if all other characters relating to public affairs be similarly composed (as they most probably are under despotic government), it is plain that a Chinese must change his language to change his political opinions; and, if it be considered that even among us the name often makes more impression than the reality, it will be plain that the very characters of the Chinese must be the foundation both for obstinate prejudices and for all kinds of false definitions and erroneous reasoning. Apply the same thing to medicine, and you have a system in which every term is founded on some of the errors usual in the infancy of an art, and it may easily be imagined how permanent every mistake in the nice and subtle science of metaphysics must be made by such a language.

‘It is probable, after all, that even authors generally think in the spoken language, in which case something will be gained among so many inconveniences by the advantage of comparing the written and spoken languages, and correcting by the one the errors into which they are led by the other. The little communication which the Chinese have had with other nations nearly equal to themselves in civilisation must be another cause of the permanency of their opinions and measures, and consequently of their government.

‘Sir G. Staunton mentions a republican sect of philosophers or politicians in China. If a succession of weak and indolent Emperors were to relax the reins of government for a long enough time to allow the people to pick up a little courage, it would be strange to see the effect of the writings of these philosophers on a people discontented with the bad government, which must be the certain concomitant of an imbecile Emperor, and feeling, as before, the evils of a vigilant and all-powerful despotism.

‘After Staunton I read part of Grosier’s “China,” and was surprised to find how little there was new in Staunton.’

As the year advanced the references to his intended publication became frequent. On October 11 he wrote: ‘I have thought of Cabul again lately, and have been translating Baber’s account of that kingdom.’ Again, on October 13: ‘The cold weather set in this morning all at once. Nothing can be more delightful than the change. I have just received a letter from Sir James Mackintosh urging me to publish on the Affghans. It could not have found me in a better humour. I shall settle with Malcolm and Irvine, and write to Lord Minto and my uncle; and my leisure during the cold weather shall be employed in preparing for the press.’

The work on Cabul which he now undertook was not, as suggested by the writer who reviewed the work in the *Quarterly Review*, little more than a reprint of his official report, but a new work in which the original materials are entirely recast. This report, a copy of which is now before me, consists of three ponderous volumes, containing the following papers:—

‘An Account of the Nations subject to the King of Cabul, with some Information regarding the Neighbouring States.’

‘A Particular Account of the Revenue and Trade of the Nations above mentioned, by Mr. Strachey, Secretary to the Company.’

‘A Map of the Kingdom and of the Neighbouring Countries, accompanied with a Memoir, by Lieutenant Macartney.’

‘An Account of the Climate, Soil, Products, and Husbandry of Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries, by Lieutenant Irvine;’ and

‘A Sketch of recent Affghan History, by Mr. Alexander.’

In the first of these volumes, which was written by Mr. Elphinstone, the information conveyed to the Government is of a general character. It touches but slightly on the state of the Court, the character of the King, or of his rivals, or of the leading nobles who took a part in public affairs at the time; nothing, in fact, which would enable the Government to take a measure of the state of parties, or of the political

prospects of the country. These matters had been in all probability disposed of in separate despatches. It may be added that the account of the Affghan tribes, which forms an important part of the subsequent publication, is very meagre.

In the letter which accompanied the report it is stated that very little was done to collect the materials for the report while the mission was at Peshawur, owing to the jealousy of the Affghan Government, and the absorbing nature of the public duties of the envoy. The information regarding the country was chiefly gathered from natives of Affghanistan after the mission had left the country, and under considerable difficulties. He recommended the Government to institute further inquiries by properly instructed natives, so that the Government might have the fullest information regarding those regions in case of a French invasion.

These volumes, now laid before the Government, contained a vast amount of valuable information regarding countries then but little known, and for the benefit of a select circle of statesmen who guided our foreign relations, with the probable fate of being cast aside to encumber the shelves or be buried in the vaults of Leadenhall Street.³

From this fate they were saved by a fortunate meeting with Sir James Mackintosh while he passed through Bombay. Such was Mr. Elphinstone's diffidence that I doubt whether he would ever have ventured on publication without encouragement. Sir James urged him to give the fruit of his labours to the world, as is modestly stated in the preface to the work. Fortified by this counsel, he devoted all his leisure during the two following years to the task, and the work appeared finally in 1814.

There is a short but interesting reference to their meeting in Sir James's published memoirs, and to the subjects of their

³ I made special inquiry at the India Office for the copy of the report which was sent home, but it was not readily found. The gentleman who assisted my search found in the *précis* of public documents mention of the despatch from Calcutta announcing its transmission, and it is probably buried in some obscure corner. The account which I have given of these State papers is from Mr. E.'s copy, which was afterwards placed in my hands.

conversation, but as he is careful only to record his own opinions, there is little in the notice that bears on this biography. A report of a conversation between Mackintosh, Elphinstone, and Malcolm on the value to England of our Indian possessions would have been something worth recording.

‘Malcolm brought Elphinstone to breakfast. We had an animated discussion about the importance of India to England. I contended that it was not of any great value. I observed that, of possessions beyond the sea, the first rank belonged to those which, like North America, contributed both to strength and wealth; the second is to those which, like the West Indies, contributed to wealth and created maritime strength, though they did not supply a military population. India certainly ranks below them; nobody thinks of employing sepoy out of India. Great as it looks and sounds, it does not add so much to the empire as New England did.

‘After breakfast I carried Elphinstone to Mazagongbunder, where he embarked for Panwell. He has a very fine understanding, with the greatest modesty and simplicity of character.’

‘*January 22, 1812.*—I continued to employ myself with great assiduity on my account of Caubul at all the intervals I could spare from business. I had many visitors from Bombay, and spent my time very pleasantly without neglecting my principal pursuits. Malcolm’s departure at last approached, and I determined to set out for Bombay to take leave. I left Poona on December 7, in company with Mr. and Mrs. Ashburner. Mrs. Morgan, Pottinger, Close, and myself completed the party. We went on the first day to Tullygaon, and on the 8th to Carlee. I had seen the cave ten years before, and always remembered it with admiration. It has a solemnity and a sort of gloomy magnificence which I do not recollect in any other Indian work. We went round all the caves. The sight now made us anxious about Buddh and his religion, and determined me to assist inquiries about them as much as I can, by getting the whole of the inscriptions copied, and sent to some person in whose hands they may be useful.

'December 9.—Marched to the head of the Ghaut. We passed through a large wood on one side. It was composed of high shady trees, with no more underwood than was ornamental. There were many creepers of a large size that wound in a variety of fantastic knots among the large branches of the forest trees. In the centre was a clear spot, in which stood a very ancient and almost ruined temple, which accorded wonderfully with the scene. The whole was wild and romantic, and put me in mind of an enchanted wood in Tasso or Ariosto. We saw and enjoyed much fine scenery about the Ghauts, besides the chasm, over which I sat for some time. It loses its wonderful appearance when one is accustomed to it, and a knowledge of the country prevents its exciting a number of pleasing associations which it presents to a person from Europe. Still, the deep solitude of the valleys, apparently shut out from all mankind, the silence which is only disturbed by the waving of its branches, and the picturesque arrangement of the crags and woods which surround it, recall many of the ideas with which one has been delighted, and lead one to fancy happy hours that might be spent in this retirement amidst the fullest enjoyment of the pleasures of the imagination.

'In the evening we went to the chasm again with the ladies, and found some places from whence we could see the angry bed of the torrent at the bottom, and have a good view of the winding valley. It was very pleasing, but the sight of the bottom took from the awe and terror which the chasm inspires when its depth is unknown.'

'February 7.—The cold weather which was to have prepared me for the press is past, and I am further from the press than I thought I was when I began. I have generally spent the time I could spare from business and other avocations in interrogating Affghans respecting their particular tribes and connections, and though I have acquired a knowledge of the whole kingdom and an intimacy with details which I by no means possessed before, I have multiplied my materials, and increased the difficulty of digesting and arranging them. I believe I only thought at first of publishing my report, with additions from my

journal and papers, and from the few inquiries I intended still to have pursued. On my present plan my report will scarcely be of any use, except as furnishing an account of the Royal Government, and of some provinces and divisions of the kingdom. It will, however, furnish materials for my historical part, but will, I fear, require much alteration and compression. It must, however, have been of use to me, by inducing me to take general views and by accustoming me to composition. I do not, therefore, regret that it was undertaken, even if its performance had not been a duty. My trip to Bombay, though it was very pleasant, though from my conferences with Malcolm it may be of great consequence to my future prospects, and though it was of no small advantage to my literary plan, by making me better acquainted with Mr. Erskine, was of some disservice to my studies. It is astonishing how much in those fifteen days I had forgot my former inquiries, and how much I had lost my zeal for making new ones. My return was succeeded by the arrival of agreeable guests, and by some excess, which brought on a slight attack of the liver; but I have now recovered my zeal and my industry, and am making rapid progress in my inquiries. Unluckily, I shall be obliged to go to Seroor in four or five days, and shall lose a week of this valuable season, besides incurring the danger of idleness and distraction after my return.

‘I have been reading Gibbon’s *Memoirs*, in the hope that, as they first gave me a love for study, they may now inspire me with some ardour in my present undertaking. I have not been disappointed; but I cannot help contrasting Gibbon’s situation with mine.

‘Setting aside his natural genius, which makes the difference too great for comparison, I observe that his life, except while in the militia, was spent in study; that he early acquired a taste for composition, which made him regard that exercise as a pleasure; that, when he was writing, he enjoyed undivided leisure, and, even in the times of his early studies, he thought attendance at meals and paying visits once a month a hardship; that he lived in the midst of books and of eminent men, and that from the first he had the confidence and ease of a master.

I have spent the bulk of my time in a sort of business which does not tend to qualify me for an author, or in travelling, dissipation, or idleness. My times of study have been only specks on this dull mass. In consequence of this, and perhaps of my earlier education, I am almost entirely disqualified from either thinking or writing like an author. I delight in inquiring and in gaining knowledge of the subject of which I am to treat, and in this I go on with vigour and rapidity; but I detest composition, which is to me a labour; and when I have only to rely on my own imagination and understanding, my steps are slow, feeble, and in darkness. I am, besides, liable to constant interruptions from business and from society; much of my time is lost in the hours which it is necessary with me to devote to meals, and thus the little portion of the day which I can allot exclusively to my work is liable to frequent interruptions. Nor is my society of any use to my taste or understanding. I seldom see among my visitors a man of any talents, and never a literary man; and, having grown up in these circumstances, I think and write on literary subjects with doubt and hesitation. These circumstances are unfavourable, but I have some advantage, and I am far from being discouraged.'

In the midst of his literary work and studies his public duties were carried on with great assiduity. The most important of these was to bring to a settlement a long-pending dispute between the Peshwa and the feudatories who held lands in the southern part of his dominions. It will be unnecessary to explain that the duties of a Resident at the court of a sovereign who has entered into a subsidiary alliance with the British Government are very different from the ordinary functions of a diplomatic representative. The conditions of these alliances was that the Prince could have no foreign relations whatever. The control of his relations with other states passed at once into the hands of the protecting state. All questions at issue with foreign states (and with the Mahrattas they were very numerous) were left to the arbitration of the British Government. In consideration of this cession, a British force was subsidised, and bound to defend the native state against all external foes,

while the Government was left free in its internal administration. Such was the general character of these engagements; but they could never be kept within the strict lines of these treaties, for the power which assumed the control was constantly called upon to interfere in the interest of order, and had the moral duty imposed on it of placing some check on the abuses of unlimited power; though much difference has arisen among Indian statesmen as to the extent to which this interference should be carried.

The Treaty of Bassein, which defined the relations between the Peshwa and the British Government, went further than these general engagements. We were not only bound to support the Mahratta state against the greater plunderers, but the subsidiary force was to be employed 'for the overcoming and chastising of rebels.'

This questionable provision was primarily directed against the anarchical condition of the territory under the immediate government of the Peshwa, which it was the object of the treaty to restore to order. So low had the authority of the Prince fallen, that General Wellesley, writing at the close of the Assye campaign, describes the Government as 'at present only a name.' He adds: 'His Highness has not settled even the country along the Beema, five miles from Poona. It is, at this time, a dreary waste, overrun by thieves, and his Highness is incapable of conducting his Government himself.'⁴

Order gradually arose out of this chaos. When Mr. Elphinstone returned to Poona in 1811, he noticed a marked change in the condition of the country, and the authority of the Prince was gradually restored throughout the territory under his immediate administration. This, however, only applied to a portion of his dominions. More than half was parcelled out among powerful feudatories, who played a part in the politics of the country similar to that which was exercised by the great feudal chiefs in Europe during the middle ages. When they were not at war with their sovereign, they engaged in war among themselves, and only united in a common course of action when

⁴ Letter to Governor-General, January 15, 1804.

they were invited to join in some war of plunder. When the Government of Poona fell into feeble hands its authority was defied.

During the confused times which followed the accession of Bajee Rao these chiefs took a part in the struggle, or waged war with each other, and profited by the anarchy in enlarging their own territory. But when the Mahratta war broke out they all stood aloof, with one exception, and General Wellesley bitterly complained of the hollow support which he received from the Peshwa and his feudatories. At times he doubted whether to attribute the conduct of the Prince to sheer incapacity, or faithlessness to the British alliance. Supplies were not forthcoming, even at Poona, and not a step was taken to come to terms with his feudatories, though constantly pressed by the British Government to do so. These latter chiefs remained in a state of sullen discontent, or engaged in home quarrels. Their neutrality was of service to our armies, whose supplies were largely drawn from Mysore, and a hostile act on their part might have changed the character of the campaign; but the absence of the Peshwa's contingent was frequently felt in the campaign, and gave confidence to our enemies.⁵

On the conclusion of the war every effort was employed by Sir A. Wellesley to bring the Peshwa to reason. There were faults on both sides, but the principal obstacle arose from the obstinacy and unreasonableness of the Peshwa himself, who would be satisfied with nothing short of the destruction of the Jageerdars.

General Wellesley proposed to enforce the claim of the sovereign, while he stipulated for a guarantee of the possessions of the chiefs, so long as they should render faithful service to their superior. Mr. E. Strachey was accordingly deputed on a mission to these chiefs, with instructions to propose terms founded on the above conditions. The negotiations had scarcely advanced beyond the first steps, which were favourably received by some and with coldness by others, when the

⁵ See *Wellington's Despatches*: Letters to Governor-General, June 4, 1803; July 24, 1803. Letter to Colonel Close, June 18, 1803.

serious aspect of the war with Holkar compelled the Government to lay aside a project which could only be carried out by the presence of a large British force, and the question was adjourned for a season of peace.

When Lord Wellesley retired from the Government new views of policy prevailed. Non-interference became the rule, and the Resident at Poona was instructed to abstain from all interference between the Peshwa and the Jageerdars, and so matters remained for some years. But the disturbed state of the country roused the Government again to action, and Mr. Elphinstone, on his appointment to Poona, was called upon to report specially on the whole question. It may indeed be inferred that he was especially selected for this duty. Sir B. Close had been deputed in the previous year to Hyderabad on some special service, and never returned to Poona; and Mr. H. Russell succeeded to the temporary charge of the Residency until Mr. Elphinstone's return from Caubul. Sir James Mackintosh, in his review of Mr. Elphinstone's work on Caubul, speaks of the author with pardonable anachronism, as owing his appointment to that embassy as 'the head of the Indian Civil Service.' When he returned from Caubul he was still young, barely thirty years of age; but his reputation had been well established even before his missions, and his intimate acquaintance with Mahratta affairs, his former service at Poona, and his relations to Sir A. Wellesley, pointed him out as the man for the post.

Mr. Elphinstone's report, which was submitted to the Government in the October following his arrival at Poona, traces the history of the Peshwa's relations to his feudatories with a master hand, and proposes a plan of arbitration on the lines laid down by Sir A. Wellesley in 1804. The claims of the Peshwa had been supposed to be vague and undefined, and to arise out of ancient and varying customs, originally introduced in the reign of the first Mahratta Rajas. All doubt was dispelled on this subject by Mr. Elphinstone's examination of the tenures of these different chiefs. One of their number, the Raja of Colapoor, was related to the Raja of Sattara, and held

an independent principality. Others held grants of ancient date from the founders of the Mahratta independence; but the greater number were of comparatively recent origin, and the conditions of tenure were defined in instruments which still existed. No difficulty was anticipated in adjudicating on these disputed questions except such as might arise from the passions which had been called into action by the prolonged struggle, and the unwillingness on the part of the chiefs to surrender the possessions usurped by them in times of confusion. These indeed raised questions of some intricacy. The Peshwa was stubborn in his demand to exact the letter of the bond.

Mr. Elphinstone proposed to enforce the Peshwa's claims to service, to compel these chiefs to surrender the lands they had usurped, and pledge the British Government for their security against the Peshwa, so long as they fulfilled their engagements to him. The question of our obligation to interfere was referred to the decision of the Supreme Government, and Lord Minto recorded a minute in which the legitimacy of the Peshwa's claims on his vassals is discussed at some length. The *casus fœderis*, however, rested on wider considerations. The anarchy which prevailed, and the inability of the Peshwa to fulfil his treaty engagements, and even to protect his territory from the incursions of the Pindarrees, had brought about a state of things that compelled us to interfere in the interest of order.

In the opinion of Mr. Elphinstone the question could not be kept open any longer. Success on the part either of the Peshwa or his vassals must lead to anarchy. If the feudatories shook off the Peshwa's yoke, their turbulence, when not expended in mutual struggles, would lead to combinations with neighbouring states which must bring about interference in the end.

A more alarming contingency would arise should the Peshwa succeed in his designs of dispossessing them by his own force, unaided by British power. In addition to the reasons urged by Sir Arthur Wellesley against our standing aloof under such a contingency, Mr. Elphinstone urged one which, in his opinion, was decisive. 'The great defect of the Peshwa's Govern-

ment,' he said, 'is the little influence which his officers possess over them, and the little interest which they have in the prosperity of the country subject to their authority. Both these advantages are possessed by the Jageerdars, and that in a part of the country where they are more required than in any other. The destruction of so many great chiefs could not fail to throw the country which they had possessed into great confusion, with which such officers as the Peshwa has at his command would be utterly unable to cope.'

I have referred only to the salient points of Mr. Elphinstone's despatch, which necessarily dealt with the different contingencies that might arise and the military arrangements that might be required to meet them. Mr. Strachey's attempt had failed, not merely owing to the state of public affairs, but to the obstinacy and unreasonableness of both parties, especially the Peshwa. 'Even at that time,' Mr. Elphinstone writes, 'the Jageerdars professed the greatest readiness to serve, and it was also Mr. Strachey's opinion and, I believe, Lord Wellington's, that if the Peshwa would have forbore to molest people who are willing to serve him, if he would have agreed to pardon old offences and forego old pecuniary demands, he would at that time have effected a settlement.'

Mr. Elphinstone approached the question under more favourable circumstances than his predecessor, and all difficulties gave way before the firm attitude assumed by the Resident, supported as it was by a large military force. The Peshwa resorted to his usual evasive arts, but at length gave way, and the promptitude with which the work of settlement was carried out left no room for the petty intrigues with which he had foiled former attempts at pacification.

While this settlement was pending the opportunity was seized of adjusting two other questions of some importance. The territory of the Rajas of Colapoor and of Sawunt Warree extended to the sea, and piracy was practised openly by the inhabitants on the seaboard. In 1804 steps had been taken to chastise them, but the evil still went on.

The settlement now made with the Raja of Colapoor in-

volved the cession of the port of Mulwan; and this nest of pirates was rooted out.

The Peshwa, jealous of the power of his own vassals, had occasionally shown a desire to raise a new force under the command of British officers, but independent of the subsidiary contingent, and available for the defence of his frontier against the Pindarrees. Mr. Elphinstone was instructed to encourage him in this disposition, but he had hitherto refrained from pressing the Prince, under a conviction that any anxiety on his part would only rouse the suspicions of the Peshwa, and that the plan could only be carried out in connection with the settlement with the great feudatories. The soundness of his opinion was verified by the result. When the Jageerdars gave in their adhesion the Peshwa instantly took alarm, and rushed eagerly into the plan of raising a brigade for his protection against the feudal militia now placed at his command. He was profuse in his expressions of gratitude to the Governor-General and to the Resident for effecting a settlement that added to his authority; but he at the same time declared that he did not wish to have a single Surinjamy horseman in his service. The new brigade was accordingly now embodied for defence against his vassals and placed under the command of Captain Ford, who had long been attached to the escort of Colonel Close.

The new force in its turn proved an embarrassment to this weak Prince, and a few years later, when the Peshwa was preparing for war and made attempts to corrupt the sepoys, it was on this body of men that his emissaries chiefly practised.

The sequel of the story will be now given as related by Mr. Elphinstone in a letter to his friend of a later date, in which he gives a summary of the whole transaction. I add some entries in his journal recorded during its progress. It is singular that the principal obstacle arose from the objection of a British officer to the plan of the campaign; but the judgment of Mr. Elphinstone was confirmed by the result:—

‘Poona, July 12, 1813.

‘My dear Strachey,—I send you the Beej Ganit, which I got copied here. It will probably go either by the “Bucephalus” or the “Lord Duncan.” I hope and believe it is correct. For God’s sake, continue to write to me. You cannot think how much pleasure your accounts of England give me. I wish I were there; but that time is still far distant. I cannot help saying *Parve nec invideo* to the Beej Ganit. I am up to the ears in business. I sent in a plan for bringing the Southern Jageerdars into order on Lord Wellington’s principles, which was necessary, because the Jageerdars, in their unsettled state, were always a thorn in our side in time of war. Lord Minto approved, and I set about preparations with the utmost secrecy, as I was equally afraid of the Peshwa and the Jageerdars getting notice of the scheme. The settlement of Colapore and the Bournello country and the extirpation of piracy were included in the scheme. I had a *carte blanche* for all the disposable force of the Deckan, and could have had twenty-two battalions, including two regiments and five companies of the King’s, and four regiments of cavalry. My plan required twelve battalions and three regiments of cavalry, and when it was all digested, Sir Samuel Auchmuty highly applauded every part but the season. I had chosen the rains, that we might not be interrupted by the Pindarrees, and Sir S. declared that in that season part of the plan was utterly impracticable, and the rest very difficult of execution. Sir S.’s opinion had great weight, particularly as he had just come from Java, *Victor ab eoi populis*; but I ventured to hold out, and pressed the affair with all expedition. After a week of sharp discussion with the Peshwa, he agreed to the plan I proposed, and next day he set out for Punderpoor, to which place he had before fortunately projected a pilgrimage. I went with him, and we were joined on the day after our arrival by a brigade from Seroor. Letters were immediately (in July) sent to all parties concerned, calling on them to come in on the terms which you formerly offered. Chintamun Rao and Rastia agreed, but the rest, with Appa Sahib at their head, refused, on which the subsidiary force

marched without delay, and the refractory Jageerdars came in forthwith. The strong fort of Koosigul, which belonged to Appa Sahib, however, held out (as if contrary to Appa Sahib's orders), till Colonel Dowse came up from the ceded districts with a nice little army, equipped for sieges, and took quiet possession in the end. All the Jageerdars came in, and we went back to Poona with them, leaving the force in the field. The Raja of Colapoor had all this time been fighting and getting beaten by Appa Dessye. I proposed to him again and again to have his claims on the Betwa investigated, and fully satisfied, if proved; but the Raja would not agree. At last his Vakeel signed a treaty with me, in which our intervention was accepted, arrangements made to prevent piracy, and the strong post and harbour of Mulwan given up to us on payment of a debt of 5,00,000 rupees owed to us by the Raja. The Raja, however, would not ratify the treaty, and as he persevered in refusing to an investigation of his claims, and continued to endeavour to take by force what he might have had by fair means, if it belonged to him, we were obliged by our engagements with the Peshwa to support the latter, and move the troops to oblige the Raja to desist from his attacks. This was done, and the troops afterwards returned to their station except Dowse, who is still on the Mulpurba, and will have a fort of the Peshwa's called Soondoor to take from a rebellious Jageerdar called Cundy Rao Gorepurry.

‘The winding up of this adjustment keeps me constantly occupied in investigations, arbitrations, &c., and prevents my going on with my own private designs. I mention all this in detail, as I suppose you still take an interest in your old friends the Jageerdars. The Peshwa is about to raise battalions, a great object with us, and he yesterday evening invested the officer who is to command them. The arrangements about pay and the establishments of the corps are all in the highest style of good sense and liberality. The private design I spoke of is an account of Cabul, which, in spite of all my occupation, is in progress. It is a good relaxation, and is pleasing and interesting to me, although I fear it will be less so to the public. I

have had Sir J. and Lady Newbolt, and Mr. and Mrs. Money, and some other very pleasant people from Bombay with me till yesterday, and I expect Sir S. and Lady Hood soon, with whom, if I can manage it, I intend to go to Ellora. Lady H. is spoken of in raptures by everybody (including Sir J. Mackintosh and Adam) for her good sense, information, good looks, good temper, and vivacity. She has lately seen all my friends, and I shall almost think myself in England when she comes. I never have a blue devil now. I often look forward with no very pleasant feelings to the length of my stay in India, and back with regret on the pleasant times which have passed even in India; but I do not feel that "the wine of life is on the lees," and I expect a deep draught of a better vintage whenever I can get to England.

'All India is quiet, except for the Pindarrees, who have alarmed us for our Bengal provinces, and forced us to put them in a state of defence.

'Ever yours,

'M. E.'

I return to the journal:—

'*July* 13.—My business has become more and more interesting. I have had a large plan for the reduction of the Southern Jageerdars to arrange. That plan was discouraged, but with moderation and propriety, by Montresor, and attacked with violence by Sir S. Auchmuty. I adhered to my opinions and answered Sir S. decidedly, but with respect. General Abercromby has since come forward in the most liberal and gentleman-like manner to give his sentiments on the plan in a private form. He differs from me in one thing, but agrees on all important points. I feel equally grateful for his dissent and his approbation. This business has for some time been settled, and after a month of unavailing negotiation about Colapoor, I began ten days ago to break the great affair of the Jageerdars to the Peshwa. After a week of debate, anxiety, and irritation, all was settled but the Colapoor business, and in the midst of it

the Peshwa would go to Punderpoor⁶ on a pilgrimage. This compelled me either to expose his person during my negotiations, or to take such steps as would make our designs public, and thus precipitate my measures. I determined on the latter, and have ordered two battalions to attend the Peshwa, whom I am accompanying. The Peshwa gave up the Colapoor business yesterday, just before he marched, and all is now ready for a disclosure. I have the Governor-General's orders and the Peshwa's consent. Five battalions, a regiment of cavalry, and 1,200 Mysore horse are ready to invade the Southern Jageerdars from the ceded districts; and seven battalions and two regiments of cavalry from Seroor, six battalions, a regiment of cavalry, and many Nizam's and Peshwa's horse are so stationed as to protect the countries of the allies; and three battalions can be spared from Bombay for an attack from the sea. I therefore entertain sanguine hopes of easily effecting a useful and necessary arrangement. My time has been quite taken up with business of late. My little leisure has been filled up by reading Corneille and Racine, both of which I admire much—the latter most.

'*July 14, Camp at Peerwalla.*—Marched at six; passed Sassore. We went on through the same valley to Jejoory. This place appears to be nearly at the end of the Poorunder range. A branch runs out to the town, and on it stands the famous temple of Candee Rao,⁷ which we dismounted to see.

⁶ Punderpoor, which was afterwards the scene of the murder of the Gykwar's Minister, contains a shrine erected to Wittoba, a form of Vishnu.

⁷ Candee Rao, or Kandoba, was an avatar of Siva, who came down on earth to vanquish a great giant that infested the Carnatic. Mr. Colebrooke, in a journal kept during his embassy to Nagpoor in 1800, gives the following account of Candee Rao's 'dogs':—

'Charity was often solicited from us by children who exhibited no appearances of poverty. We remarked that their foreheads were coloured with powder of turmeric, and that each bore a pouch made of leopard's hide, in which he deposited the alms he received, and in which he carried a provision of yellow powder. Grown persons bearing similar pouches were frequently seen, and upon inquiry the account given of their origin, the designation by which they are known, and the mode of their livelihood were found to be equally strange.

'It appears that in the Mahratta dominions childless persons frequently vow

It is approached by two flights of steps. The principal flight has arches over it in different places, and many stone obelisks with stone projections for lamps round their sides. These last look at a distance like cypresses, and form, with the arches, a singular spectacle at any distance. We were received at the bottom of a hill by a Brahmin, who conducted us to the temple. Within the wall is a round court, in the midst of which stands a temple remarkable for nothing. The court is paved, and in front of the temple is a neat circle of hewn stone, which we discovered by its having a head and four feet stuck on to it, which was meant to represent a tortoise. The temple is dark, and the god scarcely visible. Candee Rao is a great god among the Mahrattas, and particularly among the soldiers. He is the god of Holkar's family, and this temple was built by the first Mulhar Rao. We were followed by many beggars, but they were rather amusing, from the little arts they practised to attract notice, than troublesome from their importunity. Among others was a boy who, instead of asking charity, barked like a dog. He said he was Candee Rao's dog, and had been longer in the kennel than any of the present pack. A woman made a child under her arm bark in the same way, and asked charity for him, because, as she said, he was bringing up a dog. We got well rid of them by pointing respectfully to Ford, who was walking before us with great dignity. After practising thus once or twice they all took after the great man, and not a beggar would look at Close or me.'

'*July 18.*—I have been busy all the afternoon in opening the plan for the settlement of the Southern Jageerdars to their vakeels. We got to dinner at half-past eight, and I read Cowper after dinner. I now like him much better than I did at Nagpoor, though the faults I have remarked strike me still.'

to consecrate the first-born, should they obtain the blessing of progeny, to the service of a temple of Candharáo, near Puna. Such vows are so often made with success that more children have been devoted to that temple and educated for its service than suffices for attendance on the idol, or than its endowment is adequate to maintain. Many, therefore, among the dogs of Candharáo (for so they are called) roam about the country, gaining a livelihood by the exhibition of a feat of strength in the breaking of a strong iron chain.'

‘*July 19, Camp at Waukey.*—I have not remarked on the number of pilgrims who have crowded the road ever since we left Poona. They consist of men, women, and children, mounted and on foot, and some in palankeens. One of the party often sings on the journey, and is joined in the chorus by the whole group. On other occasions, the whole sing all the time. The bank of the nulla, which I see from where I sit, is now covered with pilgrims, resting, eating and drinking by the stream. We walked out in the evening to a height, from which Punderpoor is in sight, and there we observed the pilgrims prostrate themselves as soon as they descried the sacred town and temple.’

‘*Camp, Punderpoor, July 20.*—We rode on and looked for ground for the brigade. We got a very fine high spot on hard ground, within three-quarters of a mile of the town. The brigade arrived at the Beema at nine, but did not get boats till ten. We then got eleven boats. The guns were first sent over, and as there was a necessity for taking the carriages to pieces, and for unpacking all the ammunition, this gave much trouble, but was done in four hours.’

‘*Camp, Yellapoor, August 6.*—I passed a pleasant fortnight at Punderpoor. Business went on with great activity and rapidity, when it was no longer embarrassed by the necessity of consulting the Peshwa. I required, however, to move the force before I could bring in the Jageerdars. They are all in now, and everything may be said to be settled, but the troops must keep the field till all is quite secure. I had many pleasant little parties of officers, those of the brigade being mostly very gentleman-like men. We went out three or four days to hunt hogs, which, though we were not always successful, was always pleasant.

‘We marched to-day at daybreak, and saw nothing remarkable on the way but a khidmutgar of Chimnajee Appa, who was rolling from Poona to Punderpoor, in performance of a vow which he made for a child. He had been a month at it, and has become so expert that he went on smoothly and without pausing, and kept rolling evenly along the middle of

the road, over stones and everything. He travelled at the rate of two coss a day.'

'*September 29.*—I have often been sorry I leave places where I have been for any time, but I never recollect to have prized a place so much during the whole of my stay as I have this. This may be partly owing to the climate, and partly to my way of life, which never leaves me either solitary, or idle altogether. It is curious to observe what times one recollects with the greatest pleasure. I expected the Caubul mission to have been a source of most pleasing reflection, yet, for some reason which I cannot discover, the thoughts of that time are not pleasing.'

'*October 14.*—I do not see the near prospect of my being able to take up my travels which I saw this time last year. Yet I am gradually getting rid of the Jageerdars, and I shall begin with great vigour as soon as I can.'

While engaged on this work he took a warm interest in the labours of others in fields akin to his own. When in Bombay he made the acquaintance of Mr. William Erskine, son-in-law to Sir James Mackintosh, and secretary to the Literary Society of Bombay. In him he found a companion of congenial tastes, and the correspondence which passed between them was continued with interruptions till Mr. Erskine's death. Mr. Erskine was educated for the legal profession in Edinburgh, and at the instance of Sir James Mackintosh accompanied him to Bombay, where he resided for twenty years, and held several offices connected with the Supreme Court. He devoted himself to questions connected with the language and literature of India, and was an occasional contributor to the Transactions of the Literary Society of Bombay, of which he became the secretary. Among his earlier friends in Edinburgh was Dr. Leyden, and on the premature death of that eminent scholar he received the charge of many of his manuscripts, especially his unfinished translation of the memoirs of the Emperor Baber. Mr. Erskine took the work in hand, revised and completed the translation, accompanying it with a valuable essay on the races and geography of Central Asia. Mr.

Elphinstone's letters which I here insert, and others which will appear later in these volumes, contain frequent references to these special labours.

(*To W. Erskine, Esq.*)

‘Poona, November 16, 1812.

‘My dear Sir,—Soon after my return to this place from Bombay I sent a painter to Carlee to copy the inscriptions on the caves. I also sent a Brahmin writer to compare the copies with the original inscriptions, and serve as a check on the painter's fancy. I received these copies some time ago, but I was not able to attend to them immediately, and it took two months to get copies made of them. I this day send the originals to you by a cooly. I hope you will do something towards deciphering them. This seems an unreasonable expectation; but I am led to it by the reports I have heard of your success in discovering the history of some other caves, which I suppose could only be done by means of the inscriptions. I have no doubt you will be struck with the resemblance between them and the inscriptions copied from the pillars of Delhi and Allahabad, published in the seventh volume of the “*Asiatic Researches* ;” but, on comparison, the characters will not be found the same. I take this opportunity of returning Barbour's “*Bruce*,” many parts of which I read with great delight. I am afraid I must keep “*Timour*” and “*Chengiz*” till you come to claim them, unless you want them in the meantime. I have been so entirely taken up with business since I saw you that I have been able to do very little to the “*Affghans* ;” and that little was done chiefly within the last fortnight.” I have in consequence nearly forgotten the whole story, and if I had not taken so much pains to collect materials, I should certainly give up my plan of writing on the subject; but since I have begun I shall go on, and, as Barbour says—

“Drive the thing right to the end,
And take the use that God may send.”

I, however, feel myself a good deal embarrassed from my inexperience in the kind of work. I naturally set the most value on the information which I acquired latest, and which cost me most pains, and probably the minutiae which are obtained in this way are those of all others to which the public are most indifferent. I should be very much obliged to you if you would permit me to send you some parts of my intended book, as I get them ready, and if you would give me your opinion on the way of treating them. I should have a great deal of confidence if I was going on a plan laid down by a competent judge; but it is such a task to criticise another man's productions, and it is so seldom requested sincerely, that I should not be surprised if you had no inclination for the undertaking. I have just gone over all the part of "Baber" which relates to the Affghan country. It is so far superior to any other book I have ever heard of in our Asiatic languages, and contains such exact descriptions of countries, and such lively pictures of manners and character, that it is a thousand pities it is not translated. I do not think it would require much time or attention to turn it into English, and I should imagine it would just answer to fill up your time till you have leisure for greater designs. I am pretty sure I could give you all the information requisite to elucidate the transactions in the Affghan country, and I could also give some materials for accounts of the present state of the countries beyond the Oxus. Some account of the Moguls would be required; and a summary of the events which befell their empire from the time of Chengiz, or at least of Tamerlane, to that of Baber; but that might easily be made out from the books already translated, with the help of a Persian history or two. If you were able to make out your promised trip to the Deckan, I could, in a very short time, show you how far my information would be of use, and enable you to judge whether it would fill up the blanks in that which you already possess sufficiently to put it in your power to give a good commentary on Baber. I offer all these speculations in the idea that you are doing nothing at present, and have not time for any such undertaking as the history you

spoke of when I was at Bombay. It is remarkable that Baber has no article in D'Herbelot (the Baber there mentioned being another Mogul prince), and that he is not mentioned in any other European book I have met with except Dow's "Hindustan." He is mentioned, indeed, in several, but as little is said about him as if he had reigned at Timbuctoo. Yet he is probably the most illustrious person that ever flourished in Asia. I have said so much about Baber that I am afraid you will be rather tired of him, than feel any inclination to look into his memoir.

'I am, &c.,

'M. ELPHINSTONE.'

(To W. Erskine, Esq.)

'Poona, March 28, 1813.

'My dear Sir,—I have just received your letter of the 25th. I had, from the first, calculated on your taking a month or six weeks to answer my letter, and consequently did not expect any apology for the delay. It is always a formidable thing to begin on long manuscripts; and I fancy everybody puts off criticising them (after they are read) as long as possible. It would be great affectation if I was to conceal the pleasure your letter gave me, or the confidence with which your opinion has inspired me. Some of the parts of my papers, about which I was most anxious, are of that nature that unless they are good they must be very bad, and the writer himself can never be certain which of the two they are till some other person is good enough to tell him. I am now convinced that they are not ridiculous, and I shall be saved a great deal of hesitation in future. You need not be afraid that I shall be induced by your approbation to run a-muck and write fine passages on everything that comes in my way; but I shall trust to my own way of thinking and expressing myself more than I have done hitherto, and shall thus save a great deal of time that I used to spend in doubting, without producing any improvement, or even alteration. After all, I certainly considered the opening of the monsoon as the most doubtful passage, and it was chiefly on the ground of its being an unsuccessful attempt at

fine writing that I thought you would strike it out. The satisfaction I felt in reading what you say of it was proportioned to the uncertainty I had felt about its success. I shall begin again with new ardour as soon as I have an opportunity; but I am sure of never having a day to myself, and seldom can rely on an hour free from interruption. Add to this the hot weather, which often renders me quite incapable of doing anything that I am not obliged to do, and you will see my reason for thinking that it will be a long time before I send you another batch of papers. I am rejoiced to hear that you are employed on "Baber." I hope Leyden's other executors will not hastily publish his translation, as in the form in which I believe it was left it would neither give the author nor the translator fair play. If Mr. Heber would send it out to you, the public would have a chance of seeing Baber as he ought to be. I cannot help thinking that the coming out of so many books about Asia as are likely to appear in a year or two must draw the public attention strongly to Oriental literature, and be of great advantage to every individual who contributes to that burst of Eastern information. Wilks will hardly have been forgotten, when Leyden's Works, Malcolm's "History," and I suppose Sir W. Ouseley's "Antiquities of Persia," and Clarke's "Turkey," Irvine's "History of the Progress of Society in Asia," your "Baber," my "Affghans," and perhaps Pottinger's "Beloches" will all make their appearance in a body. It seems to me that you will have one great advantage, as your book will be the first complete translation from an Oriental work that has appeared, at least in English. Jones's "Nadir Shah" is the best I have seen, and I doubt whether even it would be intelligible to any person not previously well acquainted with the nations to which it relates. I have given Irvine's book a name without his authority. I do not know exactly what it is to be. Perhaps he does not know himself; but whatever it is, I am sure it will be a remarkable and a valuable production. From the way Lady Hood spoke when she was here, I conclude you knew her intimately at Bombay. If so, of course you were delighted with her. Her good sense and good taste, her know-

ledge of books and of the world, joined to her spirits and good humour, make her the most agreeable companion I think I ever met with; and to see such a person at Poona has the air of a miracle. She set off from this about a fortnight ago to cross the peninsula in the height of the hot winds. She was, when I last heard, within twelve miles of Ellora, anticipating great delight from the sight of that "land of prodigies," and looking from her tent with curiosity and anxiety at the hills which contain "Il gran tesoro dell' occulto mago." I was very desirous of accompanying her, but was prevented, and am now likely for some time longer to labour under the reproach of having spent years in the Deckan without seeing the greatest wonder it contains.

'Yours very sincerely,

'M. ELPHINSTONE.'

(*To W. Erskine, Esq.*)

'Poona, November 10, 1813.

'My dear Sir,—I have so long deferred replying to your letter of the 19th that I might be able to send off my manuscripts along with my answer. I did not, however, delay writing to Mr. Metcalfe for the Persian, and to Meer Izzut Oollah at Bokhara for the Turkish of "Baber." As I was writing to the latter, I thought it as well to request he would try to get Sheer Ali's "Chaghatay Dictionary," which would probably remove many difficulties that are to be met with in Toorkee inquiries. You appear to me to have completely cleared up all the doubt and obscurity with which the question regarding the identity of the Turks and Moguls was covered, and I am happy to observe, from what you say on that subject, that your "Commentary on Baber" will probably expand into a complete dissertation on Turkestan, if not on all Tartary, in the largest sense. Such a work is surely much wanted. It seems that by diligent search in the works of Chinese travellers, by a careful comparison of their different accounts, a considerable degree of knowledge may be obtained respecting the Eastern Tartars; but I do not know where any such information could be collected respecting those of the West, and I

believe there is no general account of the whole of the Tartars, from which we could learn the relative importance of the different nations included under that name, the points in which they resemble each other, or differ among themselves, the influence of different parts of that body on each other, and of the whole on the surrounding nations. I should think the studies to which the illustration of "Baber" has led you would enable you to give the kind of account I have mentioned with very little trouble, and, I should imagine, it would be as new in all its parts to the public as if no book on Tartary had ever been written. One great objection to learning anything from the books at present in existence (at least from the few of them that I have seen), is that it requires a thorough knowledge of the subject to read them. A proof of the ignorance of well-informed people in Europe about Toorkestan is to be found in Clarke's Travels, where Bokhara is said to be a wild and inaccessible country, peopled by savage Calmucs. This is not much like Bokharaee Shereef, a city containing near 100,000 inhabitants, full of colleges and caravanserais, the great seat of Mohammedan learning—at least so regarded among the Soonnees, and the capital of a great monarchy. From what I have seen of the people of Bokhara, they seem particularly polished in their manners, and free both from the roughness of the Affghans and the affectation of the Persians. I was struck, in reading Clarke, with the great diffusion of the Toorkee language. I see that words of it (as *kulpauk*, a cap) are used in the common language of Russia, and we know that it is spoken from Constantinople to Khoten, and from the Jaxartes to the Persian Gulf. This circumstance adds to the interest of any information you can give about that language and the people who speak it. By-the-bye, how do Clarke's friends, the Cossacks, who seem to be a band of Circassians, and other Sarmatians, come to be called by a name which seems to belong to a great Toorkee tribe on the banks of the Jaxartes? *Kuzzauk* is used about Delhi for a highwayman. Can it be (as I have heard) an Arabic *Mobaligh*,^s from *kizk* (plunder), applied to all predatory

^s Exaggeration.

tribes? Even if this be the case, it is strange that the Russians should have an Arabic name for a division of their subjects. I cannot account for the general application of the word Tartar, which ought certainly to be used as a conventional term for all the wandering tribes of the West, or not at all. I have been told by a Toork that at Bokhara it is only applied to the Uzbegs. He even said that the Tartars, or couriers in the Grand Signior's service, are or were originally of Uzbeg descent. What you have heard of the general use of Persian beyond the Oxus agrees with all my information, but I do not find that it is limited to the other side of that river. It is nowhere the vernacular language of the Uzbegs, but it is that of the Taujiks or Serts,⁹ who are found in great numbers all over Toorkistan, but also in Balkh and other places on this bank of the Oxus. It is probable there are no Taujiks among the Toorkamans, who inhabit the left bank of the Oxus, lower down than the places I have mentioned, and that circumstance may have led to the opinion that Persian is less common on this side than on the other. I have not been able to surmount the difficulty about the origin of these Taujiks. I should think they were descendants of Arabs, were it not that the Arabian conquerors are still to be found distinct from the Taujiks in the countries which were reduced by the Caliphs. They cannot be descendants of colonists sent from Persia in the days when Toorkestan was subject to the other country, for their language is modern Persian, and I have never heard of the Persians being powerful beyond the Oxus, since that language became prevalent. They may possibly be people who have been led into captivity, at different times, by the Toorkee and Affghan chiefs who have ravaged Persia, and may have multiplied within the limits of the masters, as the Israelites did in Goshen. Before I leave the subject of Toorkestan, I must assure you how happy I shall be to be of any use to Baber. I am, however, afraid I shall be of very little. You are much better acquainted than I am with many of the subjects on which I thought at first I could have given you information; and, even within Affghanistan, I do not

⁹ Name applied to the Taujiks by the Uzbegs. Elphinstone, *Cabul*, 1404.

find I can do so much as I expected. I thought, for example, that I could trace all Baber's marches, but I have tried lately and find I cannot. I am very much obliged by your offer to examine the languages of Mount Caucasus, and to compare them with the Affghanee; indeed, I am at a loss what to say in return for all the trouble you have taken on my account, especially as I know the value of your time, and how little of it is really your own. The opinion you mention of the connection between the Affghans and the tribes of Caucasus has been insisted on by a German, whose name begins with R (Ruynhart?), and whose book Leyden had, but if it has no better advocate it is scarcely worth refuting. I think all he says amounts to this, that he met a moving tribe called Affghans, whom he conjectured to be the same people with those further east. I have been told by an Armenian that a countryman of his, who wrote a history of his nation in Italian, has demonstrated the descent of the Affghans from the Armenians. The story he told was that a branch of the nation was so disgusted with the priests for enforcing the observance of Lent during a war with the Persians that they went over to the great king, and were settled in the east of his dominions. This measure of the king's is very much in the Persian style of couching¹ whole tribes from one frontier to another, and the story may possibly be true; but if there had been any resemblance between the languages, I think my informant would have pointed it out. Were the Empress of Russia's vocabularies ever published, as was intended, we might expect to find all the languages of the Caucasus among them. I should be greatly obliged by a sight of the Loor vocabulary, which is not unlikely to be connected with Pushtoo. I have taken up so much of your time that I cannot say so much as I intended about the accompanying papers. My great fear, however, is that they will prove too long, and the principal question that strikes me is whether I ought to tell everything that I know about the Affghans, or only what is peculiar to that nation. Their mode of worship, for instance, is the same as that of all Soonnees, their way of

¹ (Cause to) migrate.

sitting the same as that of most Asiatics, &c. If I struck out everything of this nature I might considerably reduce my book, but I question whether the picture it presented would be very complete, particularly to European readers, who would not be able to fill it up from their previous knowledge of Asiatic customs. If it were not too troublesome, I should take it as a great favour if you would mark any places that might be struck out, or contracted with advantage. I have finished a short account of the husbandry, which is to come into the general chapter; but I have not yet attempted the language and literature, which are required for the same place.

‘Yours ever sincerely,

‘M. ELPHINSTONE.’

(*To W. Erskine, Esq.*)

‘Poona, February 28, 1814.

‘My dear Sir,—I have already told you my expectations regarding your corrections of Leyden’s “Baber,” but I must own they have been agreeably disappointed. The style is quite easy and animated, and carries one on delightfully, without exciting the least suspicion of the operations it has undergone. But I do not know whether I need admit that I was quite wrong in what I said at first; for it may be doubted whether this is not rather a new translation than Leyden’s improved. There are a number of striking passages and many well-chosen expressions in Leyden, but in general his translation is very careless, both in the interpretation and in the style. I compared a good deal of the corrected edition with the original, and found all the alterations improvements, and some of them singularly happy. I think the tone you have adopted is exactly what it ought to be. The first point is surely to preserve, which, and to gain the confidence of the reader, it would have been worth while to sacrifice a good deal of liveliness in the style; but, in fact, I doubt extremely whether the book would not have lost even in spirit by being less literal. I am sure the merit of the translation would have been greatly diminished, as one of its principal beauties consists in the felicity with

which the idioms employed by Baber are rendered by corresponding phrases of our own. The great relief also in reading the long genealogies is to observe the peculiar expressions (the Baberisms) that occur in the course of them, and this would be entirely lost in a more free version. After all, the genealogies are the worst part, though the *gerifiting* and the *be-dust ooftanding*² of the ladies of the family show in a curious way the scrambling life of the Chaghatye monarch. Both they and the characters (which by the way are exquisite) would be much improved if some way could be hit upon for referring to them, when the persons whom they introduce come to be mentioned in the course of the Memoirs. As to recollecting the name it is quite out of the question. Nobody in England will remember the difference between Aishbagha Beg and Aisdoulat Begum, unless perpetually put in mind of it. In comparing the translation with the Persian, I took down every remark that occurred to me, and as they were scarcely legible, and not worth taking much trouble to decipher, I had them copied out for you, though their present dress makes their insignificance more conspicuous. Though I have noticed many things that scarcely required it, I have left most of your queries unanswered, and have passed over some difficulties that occurred to myself from my inability to solve them. Many of them will, however, be removed by the Toorkee, which I hope reached you safe. I hope you have a good translation of it. All my *Atrák*³ have left me. It is certainly an inimitable book ("Baber"). Nothing could be devised better calculated to lay open the character of the whole race of Tartar conquerors, from Attila onwards, the people of all others whom we have been most in the habit of contemplating with stupid wonder, as beings quite different from the rest of mankind. I do not believe there is any book that brings you so completely to the fireside of the author. It is impossible that it should not be very popular in Europe. I have been reading a book lately (or rather am reading it now) that has puzzled me a good deal. It is Bernier's account of

² Captures and falling into the hands.

³ Turks.

the wars of Aurungzebe and his brothers. I have always heard it cried up above all books for fidelity and accuracy; yet there are many things which tempt me to think it a sort of romance. The principal are, the King of Golconda coming out to receive a hostile army under the belief that it was an embassy; the princesses of Delhi choosing the handsomest noblemen for their own chamberlains, &c., and carrying on amours with them; nobles poisoned by the King in pauns (or beetels), which the etiquette obliged them to eat in the royal presence; two battles lost by the treason of chiefs, who, instead of deserting in the heat of the battle, waited till their masters had gained victories, and then changed the fortune of the day by persuading them to get off their elephants; Uzbek ambassadors inviting Christians to dinners of horseflesh, and telling long stories illustrative of the manners of their country; and Aurungzebe haranguing his courtiers on the duties of kings, making a very long speech to his father about peace, humanity, &c. &c., and reproaching his tutor with having omitted to teach him the geography of Europe, and for having been careless of the dignity of the King of France. All these and some other things stagger my faith in Bernier; but, as I never heard him mentioned without being praised for his veracity and exactness, I do not know what to think of him. As you have attended to the reign of Aurungzebe, perhaps you have formed your opinion on this subject, and (if you have an occasion to write before you forget the question) I should be much obliged by your mentioning it. The bearer will bring back my papers, if you have done with them, but I beg you will not hurry yourself.

‘Yours very sincerely,

‘M. ELPHINSTONE.’

I return to my extracts from the journal of this date:—

‘*November 4.*—I had calculated on having finished the settlement of the southern countries by this time, and on having complete leisure for my account of Caubul. This, however, appears not likely soon to be the case, and in consequence I must either arrange a plan for combining my book with my

business, or drop it altogether. By a little management I think I can have from two to three hours after breakfast to myself; and I may expect in general another hour or two in the evening. This, on an average, would be four hours a day. Will try for a week how it answers, recording my success every day.'

This is followed by frequent entries describing the progress of the work and of the political settlement. I add some miscellaneous extracts:—

Death of Sir B. Close.

'*September 21.*—We have heard of the death of Sir Barry Close. I doubt whether such an assemblage of manly virtues remains behind him. A strong and hardy frame, a clear head, and vigorous understanding, fixed principles, unshaken courage, contempt for pomp and pleasure, entire devotion to the public service, joined to the utmost modesty and simplicity, formed the character of Sir Barry Close—a character such as one would rather think imagined in ancient Rome than met with in our own age and nation.

'*March 12, 1813.*—Lady Hood has been here for these three weeks. She knows all my friends intimately, and gives their characters candidly: a treasure to a man who has been so long abroad. She is familiar with the French, Italian, and English classics, has good taste, good sense and spirits, and a thorough knowledge of the world, joined to perfect good-nature. I need scarce say I regret her departure, which happened to-day.

'*March 23.*—I still hear often from Lady Hood; but notwithstanding my constant occupation I find time to regret our reading of Dante, and our innumerable digressions. I hope I shall be able to go to Bagdad and Persia with her next year.

'*October 14.*—The last hot weather and rainy season have given me some instructive lessons. I have scarcely suffered once from causeless low spirits in the course of the two seasons, though it was in them I used to be most liable to this calamity. I have been exempted from it this year by the constant employ-

ment I have been engaged in, and I am satisfied that it is rooted in the mind far more than in the body, and that unremitting industry will always cure it.'

The following remarks may appear trite and strange as coming from a person in Mr. E.'s position, but it is to be remembered that the treatment of native inferiors was too often at that time overbearing, and it was not considered derogatory to a gentleman to give way to bursts of passion in addressing servants before friends. I infer from this curious passage that something of this habitually peeped out in communications with persons of rank, and that a bullying tone was frequently adopted by public officers, who perhaps feigned anger when they felt it not:—

‘October 20, 1812.

‘I have been thinking of another resolution, which I must mention more openly from the details which it involves; this is, to correct my temper, particularly on occasions of business. I have long since given up the opinion that frequent anger expedites affairs, and I think I have ascertained that passion not only injures dignity and takes from the weight of just resentment, but renders a man apt to receive insults tamely, from a consciousness of his irritability, and consequently doubt of the justness of the occasion. It also makes a man commit himself by proposing things he cannot conveniently stand to, and tempts him often to betray his secrets out. I have no doubt that it is possible to conquer anger. I have indeed made much progress myself. I must therefore resolve never to speak in the first heat, but to suppress my anger before I begin. I must be particularly cautious with the Peshwa and his Minister, whom it is my business to conciliate, though I have neither respect nor esteem for either of them.’

About the same date he writes:—

‘I am struck with a remark in Boswell’s “Johnson,” which agrees with an observation which I made and wrote down some time ago. It is that vivacity is an art, and depends greatly on habit. What an important habit it is to acquire! How much of a man’s happiness, particularly of an Indian’s in England,

must depend on the power to join in and enjoy society! This vivacity, or command of spirits, is possessed by all men of the world, and may truly be attained by a man of natural good humour. I have always too much neglected the art of conversation, which contributes more to esteem in one's own circle, and perhaps more to happiness, than the power of writing the "Spectator." How much of a man's knowledge is forgotten from being left unmoved in the mind. Conversation stirs it all up, and excites a desire to increase it. It also gives facility and liveliness of expression.'

These views are qualified by another remark of later date:—

'I still read Addison, and always with fresh pleasure. The "Freeholder" which I last read appears to approach nearer to the correct way of writing now in use than any of Addison's other works. I lately met with an observation in Addison which deserves to be well reflected on, and leads to important consequences. It is the ambition of men to be esteemed and of women to be loved. It is incredible how many weaknesses and effeminacies a man would be freed from who could always remember what was his real ambition; how he would be strengthened in sincerity and in firmness against solicitation if he recollected that it was not his first business to be loved. The tribe of male coquets would disappear, and many puerilities and affectations would be banished from our conduct and discourse.'

July 15 of the same year he makes the following entries:—
'I have been thinking of leaving off snuff for some time. To-day I met with an observation in a review of a novel which has almost determined me. It is on the utility of accustoming oneself to breaking habits, and to other exertions of self-denial. It becomes the more necessary, as it will really now be something of an effort. I will leave it off on the 18th. *Fiat!* Not to mention it to any one for at least a week after I have left off.

'July 16.—I have sent my snuff to be packed up in the outhouse, and have only kept enough for to-day and to-morrow. The way I adopted was first to change my common snuff for some of a disagreeable kind, and then leave off altogether.'

There is frequent reference in this volume to another reso-

lution, which is not specified. 'I have taken,' he says, 'a resolution which it must be my great care not to let slip my memory. With this view I intend to enter a note, either here or elsewhere, of my progress as often as I write my journal, and if possible once a week.' This would not seem to have reference to a very strong trial, or it would not have required this constant reminder. During the following twelvemonth the entries in the journal conclude regularly with the mysterious words, 'Res. safe.'

I should perhaps apologise for this frequent reference to smaller, and what some regard as weak traits of character. They are characteristic of the man; he was perpetually on the watch to correct habits which might interfere with the high ideal he set before him. This is illustrated by the following entries in June 1811:—

'The characteristic of my life for the last two months has been interesting, public business requiring and commanding attention. My leisure time has been filled up by desultory reading, conversation, and idleness. The time not occupied by public business will be recalled to my memory by two verses in Horace:—

"Quod si
Frigida curarum fomenta relinquere posses,
Quo te cælestis sapientia duceret, ires." ⁴

'*September 3.*—Jenkins came here on the 9th of last month. I have been busily employed on the Colapoor affairs ever since, and now begin to see the land. I have, however, read Greek with Jenkins instead of riding, which the unusual severity of the weather rendered next to impossible. We finished the Iliad in fourteen days, and are now reading the Anabasis.

'*September 15.*—Jenkins went to Bombay on the 10th. I am getting out of my troubles, and trust I have made up my mind. I have now only to push on. I have been reading my

⁴ Hor *Ep* i. 3. Horace enjoins Julius Florus, to whom the epistle is addressed, to aim high in literature. 'If, then, you can relinquish the cold incitement of cares, you may go wherever heavenly wisdom guides you.'

journal from 1797 to 1800. They give me great pleasure by reviving the taste and feelings of old times. I have probably improved in conduct since 1800, but I have rather fallen back than improved in zeal for study, in taste, and in composition. This examination of old journals increases my love of literature, and of the studies which were the delight of my youth, and which will probably be the only solace of my old age. I must not cease to cultivate this taste, as my happiness will probably depend on the degree in which I possess it, after I have withdrawn from the public service.'

'June 7, 1814.—To-day my book went off, and I am now a gentleman at large. Before I dismiss my book entirely from my thoughts it will be well to settle some points on which false expectations might lead to disappointment. The papers will not reach England till the middle of November. They will not be published till the end of February. I shall not hear of the publication till June next, and, even if they are early reviewed, I shall not see the review till the beginning of December 1815. I cannot fix with the same precision what the review is then to be; but it is impossible that general readers should not be oppressed with such numerous and minute details regarding so remote a people. The geography will also be a drawback with most common readers, but ought not to be so with the reviewers. The provinces, the royal government, and the history must, from their nature, be somewhat tedious. The buoyant parts of the book are the narrative, and part of the chapter on manners. The rest is entitled to the praise of industry and research; but a person who had visited the whole of the country might have given a much more lively and as accurate a description almost without an effort. The repetition of what is already known of Mussulman manners may produce censure, and the accounts of Affghan liberty incredulity.'

The manuscript on Caubul was despatched on June 7, 1814, and Mr. Elphinstone turned with a buoyant heart to the studies that were the enjoyment of his life. He writes, 'I am now once more free, and intend to apply the industry I have acquired to business and study.' His first thought was Greek.

‘June 15.—Jeffreys and I began on a plan of acquiring a sound and solid acquaintance with Greek, in which I see great attention to the grammar and to minutiae of all sorts is absolutely necessary. We are to read the “Port Royal,” repeat paradigms, and read the “Collectanea” carefully, examining every word and passing none till thoroughly understood. We read an extract of Herodotus in this manner with great patience and with great profit. Three or four months of similar diligence would make me a good Greek scholar. The effort will be nothing to what I have just surmounted, and I may reckon it the chief business of my private hours. I ought therefore to be able to persevere and reap the great reward.’

There are frequent notes of his progress in Greek during the following months, notwithstanding frequent interruption from the arrears of business and correspondence, which had accumulated during the last few months of his labour on Caubul. At the end of September he notes that they have been altogether forty-five days actually at it.

I insert two letters to his friend Strachey, written during the period of literary leisure. Gungadhur Shastree, whose name now appears for the first time, was the principal figure in a tragical episode that will be related in the next chapter.

‘I am busy with the settlement of the Gykwar’s and Peshwa’s disputes, which have taken up much time to little purpose. The Peshwa says the Gykwar is in his *Shikum* (I wish he was), and I have to disprove the assertion. You are of course aware that the Mahrattas express the dependence of one state on another by saying that the one is in the other’s *Shikum*. The Peshwa had gobbled up (or gobbled down, which is it?) so many states that there is great trouble in getting him to disgorge them. He is still *Shikum furbeh az lokmeharuee haram*.^b I had a world of pains to get the Raja of Colapoor out of his maw, and was in the most ridiculous position with our old friend, Appa Dessye. He was employed by the Peshwa to conquer almost all the Raja’s country, on

^b A belly fat with unlawful mouthfuls.

pretence of a claim to part of it; and when we made peace between them and began to arbitrate their differences, the Peshwa would give up nothing without a contest, prolonged by all sorts of evasion; and when that was settled, Appa Dessye (who was here with his force) would obey no orders for the surrender of places decreed to Colapoor. At last I was obliged to get rid of the first difficulty by telling the Peshwa that if he did not bring forward his proofs forthwith I should decide without hearing them, and of the second by placing four battalions over Appa Dessye, and forcing him to give up every place as soon as it was decided to belong to the Raja. The investigation, in spite of every exertion, was spun out for near three months, during which time the battalions remained staring at Appa Dessye. It was rather a bore, as I knew every officer in the Deckan must have thought me crazy; but I put a grave face on it, and I am morally certain that no other means would have got the business settled. The Gykwar's business is smother, and is enlivened by the humours of his Prime Minister, now on an embassy here. This man, Gungadhur Shastree, is a person of great shrewdness and talent, who keeps the whole state of Baroda in the highest order, and here lavishes his money and marshals his suwary in such style as to draw the attention of the whole place. Though a very learned Shastree, he affects to be quite an Englishman, walks fast, talks fast, interrupts and contradicts, and calls the Peshwa and his ministers "old fools" and "damned rascals," or rather "dam rascal." He mixes English words with everything he says, and will say of some one (Holkar, for instance): "Bhot *tricks* walla tha, laikun burra akul kund, kukhye (cockeye) tha."⁶

'Good God, if all this were to fall into the hands of the Americans and be printed for the information of Congress, what a bore I should think it. It would be worse than your poem in the surgeon's office. It really is too much for paper and the post.

'I must say a few words before I close about my works.

⁶ 'He was a very *tricksy* person, but very intelligent. He was *cockeye*.' Holkar had lost an eye.

Write me, I beseech you, a true and particular (especially a true) account of everything about them. I am anxious to hear of them, though I am not apprehensive of contempt, and have no hopes of applause. The most I look to is a character for a sober, industrious, perhaps respectable writer. How I should have disdained such a character some years ago (at Bassein, for instance), when I used to think I had some genius! I have often wondered since what could have put that into my head. There is no end to that sort of prosing. ‘*Vale!*’

‘M. E.’

In little more than a year from the despatch of the manuscript on Caubul, a tragedy occurred at the Court of Poona which led to a crisis in its affairs, and ultimately to the fall of the Peshwa’s Government. The name of Trimbukjee, the Minister who had now acquired the complete confidence of the Sovereign, and of the Minister from the Court of Baroda, his victim, occur for the first time in the letter to Strachey, and in the extracts from the journals which follow. The history of these events will form the subject of a separate chapter.

During the few months which followed the last entry the allusions to the state of his health and his depression are distressingly frequent. From this he was roused by the call of public duty. On May 8 he writes: ‘I am going to Nassick to meet the Peshwa, who is on his way thither from Waukee. The Bhow, the Shastree, the whole Court are to be there. I mean to go to Ellora, and perhaps to Janduc before I return.’ While at Nassick he was engaged for two days’ constant work in preparing a remonstrance apparently with reference to the mission of the Shastree, who had joined the Court on the previous day. Trimbukjee now appears on the scene. He gave an entertainment and sent presents of all sorts of eatables to the camp of the Resident. Many of the neighbouring villages belong to him. The Resident was waited on by the potail of one of the villages, who, though a humble village officer, was Trimbukjee’s brother-in-law.

‘It is pleasant to see Trimbukjee remember old friends and townsmen in his elevation, and this, with his care of his native village, building walls to it, &c., incline one to think well of him, if his general character would admit of it.’

Much of the interest in the record of this excursion consists in the description of its romantic scenery, mixed with notes of the memorials of former civilisation, and of the Buddhist remains that abound in Western India.

They have been fully described since this journal was written, but they were then comparatively unexplored. The towns bear evidence to a period of prosperity which carries us back to the times before the Mohammedan conquest of the Deckan. Here is his description of Sindoor :—

‘This is a large town, surrounded by a broad wall, with a large gateway flanked with round towers. There are ancient temples, little Mohammedan tombs, or buildings like them, ruined houses (some handsome ones), which show this to have been once a large and flourishing town; it now bears great marks of decay, but the numerous and extensive towers about it make it still a very pretty place. It is easy to see that it has been formerly in the hands of more civilised possessors. The numerous trees, and the buildings, both public and private, which are now in ruins, distinguish it from every place that has been founded by Mahrattas. We saw a handsome garden house (in ruins), with flowers in relief, and others painted in the niches of the walls, like those in Hindustan. We then passed a beautiful little temple, very ancient, and apparently unfinished. It is of stone, the pillars, beams, &c., most richly and elegantly sculptured. It puts me in mind of some of the temples in Egypt, of which Denon gives views. We then visited another temple, surrounded by smaller temples, and gateway, which, with the temple itself, were all of stone, most richly sculptured. The temple is said to be 700 years old, but seems much more.

‘The place had been held by Ambajee Deishmook, in the time of its prosperity, on the part of the Mogul, but it had since been ravaged by the Mahrattas.

‘Its ruin was completed by the dissension which prevailed among the Mahrattas after the present Peshwa’s accession. Mohammed Khan made it long his head-quarters, and ransacked every hole and corner in it. Even my fat, lazy, luxurious moonshee was a soldier in those troublous times, and had the plunder of the place assigned for the pay of himself and three hundred horse he had in the service of Jube, then in rebellion against Sindia. He came, forced the gate without resistance, seized a Kauker and other people of property, and showed them no mercy till they had ransomed themselves. The moonshee got 8,000 or 9,000 rupees for his own share, I believe.

‘In the evening we went to see the Deishmook’s house. It is of immense extent, composed of a great many courts (they say fourteen), enclosed by a very high stone wall. It is in the Mohammedan style, and has had many handsome apartments; but all are now ruined by Shahamut Khan, who pulled down the walls in hopes of discovering treasure. The Deishmook, a poor old man, received us on a scrap of tattered Persian carpet, the remains of his former finery. He was very civil, but was as careful in not rising too early, or advancing too far to meet us, as the most prosperous and punctilious Ameer could be. We rode among some pretty gardens to the south of the town.

‘Nassick showed even greater signs of decay. The suburbs ruined and deserted, and about half the town in this state, but still retaining monuments of former prosperity. The houses being ornamented with wood-work, and verandahs with pillars, some twisted and some straight, all newly ornamented with flowers and other patterns cut deeply in the wood; and balconies ornamented in the same manner, projecting a little over the street, and supported by carved masses of wood jutting out from the wall. The beam over the front of the shops is always sculptured in this way, and is said to be common in that part of the country.

‘*May 27.*—After two days’ constant work preparing a remonstrance I had my hands clear by the afternoon, and determined to fill up the time with a ride, and attempt to find out the caves we had heard of. The moonshee had luckily a visitor

who knew the way, and we set off under his guidance. After riding six or seven miles we came to a hill about 600 or 700 feet high, and perceived a sort of gallery cut round it half-way up; this was the road that runs along in front of the caves. We climbed up and saw them; they are about fifteen or twenty, most of them quadrangular, like the secondary caves at Carlee or Kanera; of the last of which places they put me most in mind. The finest is a quadrangle nineteen paces long and eleven broad. There are doors opening into cells all round, except in the middle of the side fronting the entrance, where there are four handsome pillars forming the verandah to a chapel, in which sits a black figure above the human size. He sits on a chair or bench, and is somewhat tremendous, notwithstanding his gilt whiskers and white eyes. These differ from most other temples of Buddha in still being occasionally resorted to, especially by Mahrattas and other unlearned folk. In consequence, many of the statues are fresh painted and gilt. This is the principal difference between these temples and the others I have mentioned. There is a fair at Carlee, as there is here.'

The party wandered for two or three weeks from the date of the last entry in this picturesque country, occasionally penetrating the passes which divide the Deckan from the Concan. The towns and scenery are described with the same minuteness as before. I confine my extracts to the following remarks on what appears to be his first perusal of '*Paradise Regained*,' and an account of some more cave temples and the romantic scenery in which they were placed, and by which the Buddhist hermits seem to have been attracted.

'*June 9.*—Jeffreys and I read "*Paradise Regained*" together. It impressed me with the greatest admiration; it is inferior to "*Paradise Lost*" alone, and that only in the subject. Milton is no longer left at liberty, by the looseness and conciseness of the sacred text, to give way to his imagination, and in consequence the tempter loses all the energy and sublimity of character with which he is invested in "*Paradise Lost*." He is here the old common vulgar devil, all but for the cloven foot. On the other hand, Milton perhaps takes a liberty with the

original, which adds greatly to the interest of his poem, in representing our Saviour as unconscious of His divine nature, and perplexed by the impulses of the spirit which He feels move within Him. He is a young man of great genius and vast designs, under the guidance of a mysterious and obscure inspiration. As long as this is preserved we are interested for our fellow-man, and the judgment of the design is made conspicuous from the flatness of every passage where the hero discloses any of the qualities of a portion of the divinity. There is a good deal of scholastic argument here, as in "Paradise Lost"; but I think better managed, and, indeed, singularly perspicuous and flowing, as well as forcible and eloquent; but the passages I most admire are the following: The wild and gloomy images presented at our Saviour's sojourn in the desert, especially at the time when Satan begins his foreboding address; the scene of the banquet and the banquet itself in the second book; the splendid and magnificent pictures of the Assyrian and Roman empires which equal, and the exquisite description of the tempestuous night, followed by a serene morning, which surpasses anything of the same class in "Paradise Lost." I ought not to omit the pleasing picture of Athens.'

'*Poonere, June 19th.*—Marched at daybreak; passed two rivers with steep banks, one the Arnuddee, and the other the Krishnawontee, on which we encamped yesterday. I went with Jeffreys to look for a hog, and crossed a fertile plain, cut with many deep ravines, and reached the hills. After passing them, we saw the town and rich valley of Joonere, with the scarped fort of Sheonanee over the town. As we went along the hills twelve foxes were seen, but only one killed. After a short breakfast, we got up a long avenue of young peepul trees, stretching from the town to the caves of Gunaish Laina. We rode a mile to the caves, dismounted, and after a moderate ascent we reached them and looked at them. The view of them from below had some interest and dignity, but no new merits were discovered on a close inspection. They were in the style of the Nassick caves, but inferior. The largest is on the same plan with the large one at Nassick, rectangular, and

surrounded by cells, but it is much more open and more light : it is broader (being fourteen paces), and not so long (being only seventeen or eighteen paces) ; there was no verandah or deep chapel as at Nassick, but a recess closed with a gilt grating, behind which sat Gunaish. I do not know whether he is the original proprietor or an intruder, but two or three of the other caves were evidently designed for Buddha. There was a small one on the Carlee model. We now determined to ascend to the top of the hill, and accomplished it after an hour and a half of very hard work. The view was very fine : to the east was Narayinghur, at a distance of eight or ten miles, and the whole of that vast and rich plain which we passed on May 10, which extends thirty or forty miles east and west, and eighteen or twenty north and south.'

They ascended a high mountain that closed the valley.

' From the top we saw a narrower valley than that already mentioned, through which ran a river in many windings shining in the sun. The valley was bounded on the north and south by hills ; the west seemed mountainous but was concealed by clouds. We went for about a mile along the top of the hill, on a slope above the precipice, and at length descended a steep place to the bridge, which was about four or five feet broad and twenty long. Though so broad, there was something awful in passing it, from the depth of the perpendicular black walls beneath. There were many strange caves and holes in these rocks, which would have been fine retreats for bears if they had been accessible. While we sat beyond the bridge the clouds rolled up the northern valley and completely concealed it from sight, presenting a scene like that which struck me with such admiration at Logur. We seemed to be standing on the extremity of the universe, and looking into chaos to spy "the secrets of the hoary deep"—a dark "illimitable ocean." At Logur many sounds were heard to rise from the valley, which was sometimes imperfectly seen, gleaming with a strange mysterious sunshine through the gloom. It put me in mind of Dante standing over the gulf of Malebolge, and I almost expected the monster Geryon to ascend on his broad pinions. Here the effect was

heightened by a singular circumstance: while all on the northern side was lost in gloom and darkness, the southern valley and all on the right hand of the ridge were clear, sunny, and serene. It looked as if we had been placed between Tartarus and Elysium. The fear of losing ourselves in the fog made us now hurry back. We found a pool of excellent water, which is scarce on the hills, and laid down to tiff on a full soft bed, made by the grass of last year and this. After tiffing, I was cold and unwell, and set off to warm myself; I stopped half-way down the first ridge, in a sheltered place, and nearly fell asleep. I rose refreshed when the rest arrived, walked along the first level ridge and along the face of the hill, where we descended by a new road, mounted our horses, and were home by a little after six, the distance being two miles. We had been on our legs for twelve hours, excepting three-quarters of an hour spent at breakfast; we had only ridden ten miles and walked as many, but the walk, from the nature of the ground, might count for double the distance. In the evening, Close and I read some of the 9th *Æneid*, having got so far in a regular perusal of the poem, and read two articles in the "Quarterly Review."

(‘21st.—I suspect I have much underrated the height of the hills.’)

The hills around Kullum, a town about twelve miles south of Joonere, and their next halting-place, abound in these caves, formerly tenanted by Buddhist anchorites. The greater number were found in places difficult of access, and the party had to give up the attempt to reach some of them after fruitless climbing. Those that were visited are described as very handsome, after the Carlee fashion, and appearing to advantage from the yellow colour of the stone. They had many inscriptions in the character of the inscriptions of Carlee. There was nothing noteworthy about them, with the exception that some of the caves were almost buried in the soil that had accumulated, and that one had been appropriated to Bhowani.

The party returned to Poona with great reluctance after ‘this delightful trip,’ as it is described. He longed to start on

a new excursion, and the occasion was soon afforded. The Peshwa started on the ominous visit to Punderpore, soon to be the scene of the Shastree's murder, and Mr. Elphinstone took advantage of the opportunity to enter on another exploring expedition, this time to the far-famed caves of Ellora. A curious entry, made when he left Poona, illustrates the old observation, that the practical events that pass around us so much eclipse those which are far more important, but carried on at a distance :—

‘We heard this forenoon that Bonaparte has taken Paris. It makes no impression. People, instead of being alarmed, think it rather good fun, though most expect him to keep his crown without extending his territory. I have had “Waverley” and the “Lord of the Isles” for some days, but have had no time to read them, having been engaged on a long private letter on the present state of India, and on the extirpation of predatory war. I hope to finish it in a day or two.’

On their way to Ellora they passed many scenes of old Mohammedan grandeur. At Ahmednuggur they visited Salaubut Khan's tomb and the place where Aurungzebe breathed his last. From thence they proceeded to Aurungabad and the celebrated fortress of Dowbetabad. I give Mr. Elphinstone's remarks on what has been ranked among the strongest fortresses in the world :—

‘Within the city walls is a citadel enclosed by a double rampart, ditch, and glacis, about a mile and a half in circumference. This appears to have been the royal residence, and contains the ruins of a palace and remains of gardens, with one large pond. Within this is another citadel, with another rampart. It stands on a platform higher than the great citadel. Over this is the fort. It is a hill about 400 or 500 feet high, the upper and lower parts of which are in their natural state; but the centre for about 150 yards is a scarped and quite perpendicular wall, at the foot of which is a ditch, cut in the solid rock about 30 feet deep. At first sight the only striking thing was the labour it must have cost; but on gaining a favourable point of view, and looking along the face of the hill

and the length of the ditch, there was something grand in the boldness and elevation of the rock. This scarped wall runs all round the fort, and the only ascent is by a passage and winding stairs, through the body of the rock. This passage is passed by torchlight, and has something gloomy and romantic, produced by reflecting on the strength of the place. The top of this is covered, when required, by an iron trap-door, and they tell you that when a fire is kindled over it the cavern below is too hot to be borne by any assailant. Near this trap-door is a hole through the rock to a place over the ditch, from which is the best view of the face of the rock.

*‘Ellora, July 24.—*Rode to Caughaz Warra, a very neat village of Mussulmans; saw the paper manufactory. Rode on to Rauza, where (besides a neat little stone caravanserai, and the tombs of some saints, remarkable for the handsome cloistered courts that surround them), we saw the tombs of Aurungzebe and his sons, Narain Naki Khan, Mullik Amber, and Murteza Nizam Shah. We also saw a tomb of a foster-brother of Aurungzebe in a dark grove. The inside is handsome and prettily painted; we met crowds of fakeers (there are said to be 1,500 in the place). Some accompanied us to the hills over this place, and then left us to the Brahmins, who were ready to receive us. The beautiful village and gardens of Ellora are a near and a fine part of the view. The town of Rauza itself has a fine wall, and the traces of prosperity, though now almost in ruins. The numerous tombs and other buildings have that sort of interest one always finds among Mussulman remains. We are now passing to another people, another age, and almost to another world. The first view of Kylaas made a deep impression on me. Its vast and massive piles, hoary and venerable with age, yet retaining the richness and variety of their earliest days, struck me with wonder and admiration. The number of pinnacles, portals, galleries, and statues, and the profusion of ornament that was lavished on each of them seemed infinite; but what delighted me most was the view up the left of the temple as you enter. A colonnade of a great many pillars supports a mass of solid work, a hundred feet high, which

projects near thirty feet beyond the pillars, forming a broken and irregular roof, and hanging over with a boldness that inspires awe, and almost terror. I saw many other caves, mostly belonging to Buddha. The figures, which are like those of Elephanta, pleased me in some, the borders and ornaments in others; but the echo in the Carpenter cave (where the voice in a particular situation sounds like thunder), the magical effect of the landscape from the depth of the cave called Dan-nalla, were what struck me the most. I returned to Kylaush, which was now nearly quiet and deserted. Captain Sydenham went into the temple to play on the flageolet, and I to walk in the colonnade. The instrument, though but indistinctly heard where I was, had a mild and pleasing sound, and the whole scene was solemn and sublime. I went into the temple at last, and enjoyed the flageolet, which retains all its softness, and yet gains a fulness that makes it quite enchanting.'

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CHAPTER IX.

TRIMBUKJEE, 1815-1817.

CHARACTER OF BAJEE RAO—HIS POLICY—TRIMBUKJEE—MURDER OF THE SHASTREE—ACTION OF THE RESIDENT—BAJEE RAO GIVES WAY—IMPRISONMENT OF TRIMBUKJEE—HIS ESCAPE—NEW TROUBLES—PREPARATIONS FOR WAR—A CRISIS, AND NEW TREATY.

THE settlement with the Jageerdars, described in the preceding chapter, whilst it added to the Peshwa's power, served in some respect to draw closer his alliance with the British Government. The military resources, placed apparently under his control, were at first a source of alarm, and he rushed eagerly into a plan which had frequently been submitted to him before to raise a brigade under the command of British officers, and render him independent of his feudatories.

The stability which his government now acquired led him to form exaggerated expectations of gaining new strength, mixed with some obscure dreams of restoring the authority of the first Peshwas; but, in Mr. Elphinstone's opinion, Bajee Rao never seriously entertained a thought of an increase to his own power at the expense of the British alliance previous to the events that I have now to relate.

As the character of the prince determined the course of the events that culminated in his ruin, I give the portrait of the man as drawn by Mr. Elphinstone after some years of residence at Poona. It is taken from a report on the resources and character of the Peshwa's Government, drawn up in November 1815.

‘The character of his Highness the Peshwa has always perplexed those who have been interested in discovering his sentiments or calculating on his conduct. This is partly owing

to the inconsistency of many of his inclinations with his ruling passion of fear, and partly to the deep dissimulation which enables him to conceal his real feelings and intentions, and to display others which are foreign to his mind. If he were less deficient in courage, he would be ambitious, imperious, inflexible, and persevering; and his active propensities would probably overcome his love of ease and pleasure, which are now so strong, from their alliance with his timidity. As it is, he is eager for power, though he wants the boldness necessary to acquire it, and is tenacious of authority, though too indolent to exercise it. Even his indolence is broken in on by his habits of suspicion and vigilance, and there is no part of his character that is to be found unmixed and entire. His love of consequence makes him fond of the company of low dependants, where he can enjoy his superiority unresisted. With them he is haughty and overbearing, and even with others he is proud and lofty on some occasions; but when it suits his purposes, there is no meanness to which he will not descend. Though capricious and changeable in his humours, he is steady in his serious designs. Concession encourages him to persevere, and opposition only increases his obstinacy, unless it operates on his fears. He is vindictive in the extreme, he never forgets an injury, and spares no machinations to ruin the object of his resentment. These arts indeed cost him little, for, to his habitual insincerity he joins a talent for insinuation, and a natural love of artifice and intrigue. With such qualities, it is not surprising that he should have a general distrust of others, and that nobody except Trimbukjee should ever have possessed his confidence; nor is it perhaps to be wondered at in such a character that, when he met with an instrument too low to be feared, too despicable to excite jealousy, and too servile to irritate by opposition, he should repay his apparent devotion by unbounded attachment, and should lavish upon him the confidence which he withheld from all the rest of mankind.

‘To balance his vices, it must be admitted that Peshwa is by no means deficient in abilities, that he is scrupulously

just in pecuniary transactions ; humane, when not actuated by fear or revenge ; frugal but not parsimonious in his expenses, and at once courteous and dignified in his manners. Some other parts of the Peshwa's character must be mentioned, though they do not affect his public conduct. He is a slave to superstition ; half his life is spent in fasts, prayers and pilgrimages. A large portion of his revenue is consumed in magical practices, and his life is disturbed by his attention to prodigies and omens. His superstition imposes no restraint upon his pleasures, and the greater part of his time that is not occupied by religion is devoted to vicious indulgences. Though he affects great purity in his own person, scarcely a day passes that he does not spend some hours with his favourites in large assemblies of women, when he enjoys the coarsest buffoonery, and witnesses most disgusting scenes of debauchery. These parties are generally composed of women of rank, and his Highness's most implacable enmities are those which he bears towards Sirdars who refuse to allow their wives to join them. The fall of Candee Rao Rastia originated in his obstinacy in this respect. The unrelenting persecution which is still carried on against Madhoo Rao Rastia is partly owing to the same cause, and Gocla's former disgrace and present favour are confidently ascribed to his tardy acquiescence in the dishonour of his family.'

In the same State paper Mr. Elphinstone describes the 'domestic and foreign policy of the Court as partly founded on its ancient maxims and partly on its actual situation. The first Raja Sattara was the head of a band of freebooters. He was joined by other adventurers of the same description, who co-operated on a footing of greater or less equality, and probably at first divided their plunder and their conquests as the Pindarrees do now. The ascendancy of Sivajee's genius, and the circumstance of his armies being chiefly composed of men of his own nationality and religion, enabled him to set up an imitation of the old Hindoo Rajaships, and perhaps to introduce something like regular government; but he must still have acted more on the principle of a chief of robbers than of a

sovereign, and the weakness and distraction in his dynasty after his death must have kept these principles in their full activity, by compelling the Mahratta chiefs to maintain themselves as they could, without an efficient head. The force of the Government was at length restored by the abilities of the Peshwas. These ministers seem to have enjoyed the full exercise of sovereignty long before the famous abdication of the Raja in favour of the third Peshwa; but even after that transaction there were many of the Raja's officers who pretended to be on an equality with them.'

After a short notice of the relation of the different Mahratta chiefs to the first Raja and to the different Peshwas, the despatch proceeds to describe 'the policy of the Peshwas since their first establishment as having for its object to detach and swallow up those remains of the Raja's dependants, while they set up a similar body of Jageerdars of their own. Of this number are Sindia, Holkar, and the Putwurduns.

'None of these were on the footing of independence ascribed to the Jageerdars of the Raja, who were the partners of his struggles and his success. They were the servants of the Peshwa, and remained in tolerable subordination till the murder of Narayun Rao by Ragoba, the father of the present Peshwa.'

The despatch traces cursorily the events which followed the rise of Nana Furnaves, the acts by which Bajee Rao played off one of these great feudatories against another, till at length, after exhausting all his artifices, and trusted by none, he was compelled to appeal to the support of the British Government. It proceeds:—

'After the Treaty of Bassein and the confirmation of our ascendancy by the success of the Mahratta war, the Peshwa disclosed a regular plan to remove everything that was great in his territories, and to draw the whole power of the state into his own hands. He had been oppressed by the greater chiefs, betrayed by the ministers, and deserted by all, and a desire for revenge combined with his love of personal consequence to determine him to rout out the whole body. Accordingly he pursued the plan of his ancestors in gradually depressing the

dependants of the Raja, while he attempted to reduce those of his own family, by confiscating the land of all the Jageerdars who were too weak to resist him.'

A certain amount of success attended these first efforts, and he recovered the land that had been held by his predecessors in the Deckan, and reduced some refractory chiefs. 'He then began to look abroad,' and it became his object to reduce the Southern Jageerdars, to press his demand on the Gykwar and the Nizam, and even to insist on his rights in Hindustan, or his sovereignty over Colapoor, Sawunt Warree, and Gurra Kota, and even over Sindia, Holkar, and the Raja of Berar.

His relations with the British Government now became strained. There was no escape from the irritation produced by this constant friction. A policy of non-interference was rendered impossible by the numerous guarantees in which we were involved on behalf of Amrut Rao (the Peshwa's brother), and his numerous dependants, the relations of Nana Furnaves, and, now, the Southern Jageerdars. The despatch proceeds: 'He showed himself early averse to our meddling in his affairs. He told the Duke of Wellington so in plain terms, and the early despatches after the Treaty of Bassein complain that it was enough to secure the failure of every plan for the good of his government that we recommended it.'

But the occasions which called for the intervention of the Resident were not limited to the greater transactions mentioned in his despatches to the Government. It is pointed out that the reciprocal complaints of the Peshwa's ministers and his subjects, and of foreign governments and their subjects, for acts of violence on the frontier, for government claims, claims of property, contested claims in villages belonging to Sindia and Holkar within the Peshwa's territory—all these matters afforded constant ground for dispute. And besides these there were numerous smaller affairs arising from complaints of merchants, sepoys in our service connected with the subsidiary force, applications from the Peshwa's Government for exemption from customs, surrender of criminals, &c.

The despatch concludes with the following description of the

Peshwa's own conduct in these matters, with some speculation on the future :—

‘His Highness’s method of resisting our proposals, when he cannot do it of right, is to throw all sorts of obstructions in the way of the affair we wish to carry. Sometimes starting objections, and at others professing great readiness to do as we desire, but thwarting us by some indirect channel, or letting the matter lie over in such a manner that, even when one is aware of the system, it is difficult to say, in each individual case, whether the delay is the result of design, or of the ordinary habits and vices of the Government. The late transactions may have altered the Peshwa’s views of many of the subjects alluded to, but it will be some time before the effect of these changes can be confidently spoken of. The state of our relations to the Peshwa has always been much influenced by his Highness’s personal character, and it might be interesting to speculate on the form they might assume if the numerous claims and pretensions of this Government were to fall into the hands of an active and warlike Peshwa, who would attend to the improvement of his army, conciliate his Jageerdars, and encourage the former great feudatories of the empire to look on him as their chief. It is obvious that in the present state of India there are fine materials for a powerful confederacy under such a leader ; but he must be an extraordinary genius who could start up with such a character from the midst of a long peace and of a Brahmin education.’

The Minister who now acquired ascendancy over the mind of this weak prince was first introduced to the notice of the Government in a despatch dated March 1815.

Mr. Elphinstone writes : ‘The influence of the Minister, Seddasheo Mankeysur, has long been declining, but it is only of late that his authority has been openly encroached upon by the appointment of Trimbukjee Danglia to conduct the Peshwa’s negotiations with this Residency. Trimbukjee is a menial servant of the Peshwa, who first recommended himself to notice by carrying messages to his partisans at Poona during his Highness’s flight to Bassein. He has since increased his favour by

disreputable means, the most public of which is his readiness in farming the revenue of different districts at a higher rate than any one else would offer, thus humouring the Peshwa's avarice, while he indemnifies himself by extortion from his subjects; but the great acts by which he has secured his master's confidence are his suppleness in adopting his Highness's views, and his boldness in attempting to carry them into execution.'

The despatch enumerates the transactions by which he endeavoured to advance his master's interest, some of which were serious departures from the principles of the alliance, and proceeds to describe the circumstances under which he was first introduced to Mr. Elphinstone's notice. 'Since that time,' he proceeds, 'he has paid me several visits, and has shown a great desire to conciliate my good-will, both in his own person and by all sorts of underhand overtures and promises of good behaviour, as if the only bar to his immediate nomination to the office of Prime Minister was a doubt whether his appointment would be acceptable to the British Government. He certainly is a very unfit person for such a charge. He is so absolutely illiterate as not to have learned to read, and his manners and understanding are such as might be expected from the class to which he belongs. He is entirely ignorant of the state of India, of the comparative importance of his master's State, and of its relation to the British Government as fixed by treaty; and to this must be added that he bears a bad character, even among the Mahrattas, for falsehood and want of faith.'

Mr. Elphinstone decided to offer no objection to Trimbukjee's promotion. To endeavour to control the prince's selection of a Minister was a course to be deprecated except on grounds of urgent public necessity, and at this time he was not under any apprehension that the Peshwa would break the alliance. He concludes: 'We may perhaps derive some temporary advantages from the desire of the new Minister to establish himself in the confidence of the British Government. This last advantage will, however, be of no long duration, and, from the character of Trimbukjee, I am afraid we must meet with more active endeavours to realise the Peshwa's pretensions, and

more unreasonable resistance to our advice when at variance with our designs, than we have ever experienced from the present Minister.'

These expectations were very soon realised. The state of India at this time (1815) afforded an ample field for his mischievous activity. Although the British Government had been compelled, in the cause of order, to take a part in the internal affairs of the Poona State, its external relations had not been controlled to the full extent that we were entitled to demand by the Treaty of Bassein. Ministers from all the principal States of India continued to reside at the Court, and a considerable amount of correspondence was carried on that did not pass under the eye of the British Resident. This laxity would appear to have arisen from the number of pecuniary questions that remained outstanding between the Peshwa and the neighbouring governments of Hyderabad and Baroda, which made it difficult to close at once all external and political correspondence. Nor did it seem to be of any political importance to insist on a settlement, through British arbitration, so long as there was a disposition on the part of the native states to settle these matters themselves. The negotiations connected with the claims on Baroda afforded a harmless occupation to the Peshwa, gave room for correspondence, interchange of missions, and postponed the time when these sources of intrigues were to be finally closed. When, however, our reverses in Nepal and the unsettled state of India gave courage and confidence to the enemies of British rule, the opportunity was seized upon by Trimbukjee to enlarge his master's correspondence and intrigues, and put forward claims inconsistent with the position of subordinate alliance to the British Government. Matters were rapidly arriving at a crisis that must have compelled the British Government to assume a tone of decision, and Mr. Elphinstone was preparing for this, when the crisis was brought on, in a most unlooked-for manner, by the horrible transaction which followed.

There is no part of Indian history on which so full a light has been thrown, as the murder of the unfortunate Shastree,

and the important events which followed. Our subsequent conquest of the country gave us sources of information which were improved by the local inquiries of Grant Duff, and we can trace the undercurrent of intrigue by the light of subsequent knowledge, and with aids that Mr. Elphinstone did not at the time possess. The Shastree came to Poona, as the envoy of the Baroda Government, to endeavour to bring to a settlement the pecuniary questions to which I have already alluded. The illusive character of the Peshwa's negotiations was well known to the Baroda Government. The Peshwa, though always pressing for a settlement, showed no disposition to arrive at one; and when at length an envoy was sent at the instance of the Peshwa, matters seemed less advanced than they were several years before. The unhappy victim who was sent on this disastrous mission had personal grounds of fear, and declined to place himself within the power of one so violent and unprincipled as Trimbukjee, without a direct guarantee of safety from the British Government. These apprehensions were lulled for a time by the caresses of the Prince, whose object was to gain an influence over the Baroda Court by binding the Shastree to his side. A matrimonial alliance was projected between the Peshwa's sister-in-law and the Shastree's son, and preparations were being made for the ceremony. The Shastree who was governed alternately by fits of blind confidence and not unreasonable fears, now took alarm lest, in gaining the favour of the Peshwa, he should forfeit that of his own Sovereign, and imprudently broke off the engagement so far advanced, and gave other and more deadly cause of offence in forbidding the ladies of his family communicating with a Court so dissolute as that of Poona. Revenge being the dominant passion in the Peshwa's mind, an agent was at hand ready to second the impulse, and the Shastree was put to death by hired assassins in the open street at a place of pilgrimage to which he had accompanied the Peshwa, and almost within hearing of the Minister who had ordered the slaughter.

There were none of the difficulties in this case which usually obstruct justice in British India; for the public voice,

shocked at the murder of a Brahmin in a place of sanctity, supported Mr. Elphinstone in those inquiries which he was called upon to make to vindicate the broken guarantee of his Government.

For a moment he hesitated whether he should at once call for inquiry, or wait for instructions from the Supreme Government. The reasons which pressed for prompt action overpowered all other considerations. Delay would enable Trimbukjee not merely to remove proof of his own guilt, but to precipitate a political crisis by acting on the fears of the Prince. The motives which prompted the crime were still obscure, and Mr. Elphinstone evidently leant to the belief that whatever may have been those of Bajee Rao, the Minister was actuated rather by political than by personal feelings, and that it was neither safe nor honourable to delay to strike. 'If Trimbukjee,' Mr. Elphinstone wrote, 'expected to be accused by our Government (and nothing but the deepest dissimulation on my part could have prevented his doing so), he would probably have employed the interval in perverting the Peshwa's mind, and engaging him in acts of violence at home, and in such foreign negotiations as are inconsistent with the alliance. This would be facilitated by the Peshwa remaining so long in suspense whether the accusation might not be directed against himself.'

'It was uncertain what were Trimbukjee's ultimate designs in the murder of the Shastree, and there appeared strong grounds to suspect that his proceedings at Baroda would lead to a crisis even if we were to remain passive. It also seemed to me certain that my instructions, when they arrived, would be to call on the Peshwa for justice, and as no period would be less inconvenient for such a demand than the present, nothing would have accrued from the delay but the disgrace of appearing to doubt whether your Lordship would resent the murder of a public Minister invited hither under so solemn and repeated promises of the protection of the British Government.'

'These considerations, but chiefly the dishonour of re-

maining silent when the whole country cried out, induced me to accuse Trimbukjee as soon as I had an opportunity.'

The memorial which he now addressed to the guilty Court is a masterpiece of energetic remonstrance. After recapitulation of the presumptions and proofs of the participation of Trimbukjee in the murder, it proceeds:—

'On all these grounds I declare my conviction of Trimbukjee Danglia's guilt, and I call upon your Highness to apprehend him, as well as Govind Rao Bundojee and Bhugwunt Rao Gykwar, and to deposit them in such custody as may be considered safe and trustworthy. Even if your Highness is not fully convinced of the guilt of these persons, it must be admitted that there is sufficient ground for confining them; and I only ask of you to do so until his Excellency the Governor-General and your Highness shall have an opportunity of consulting on the subject. I have only to add my desire that this apprehension may be immediate.

'A foreign ambassador has been murdered in the midst of your Highness's Court. A Brahmin has been massacred almost in the Temple during one of the greatest solemnities of your religion; and I must not conceal from your Highness the impunity of the perpetrators of this enormity has led to imputations not to be thought of against your Highness's Government. No one is more convinced of the falsehood of such insinuations than I am; but I think it my duty to state them that your Highness may see the necessity of refuting calumnies so injurious to your reputation. I beg also to observe, that while Trimbukjee remains at large his situation enables him to commit further acts of rashness, which he may undertake on purpose to embroil your Highness with the British Government. He is at the head of the administration at Poona, and has troops at his command; he is likewise in charge of your Highness's districts which are contiguous to the possessions of the British Government, and of the Nizam and the Gykwar; and even though he should raise no public disturbance there, I cannot but consider with uneasiness and apprehension in what manner your Highness's affairs will be conducted. For these reasons,

it is absolutely necessary that immediate steps should be taken, as your Highness will be held responsible by the Governor-General for any acts of violence which Trimbukjee may commit after this intimation. I, therefore, again call upon your Highness to adopt the course which I have pointed out to you as the only one which can restore confidence to the public ministers deputed to your Court. They cannot otherwise enjoy the security necessary to transact business with your Highness, nor can they with safety even reside in the city, and everybody will be obliged to take such steps as he may deem necessary for his own protection. One consequence of this will be an interruption of your communication with the British Government, until the measure I have recommended shall be adopted. I beg that your Highness's reply may be communicated through some person unconnected with Trimbukjee Danglia.'

Not a little difficulty was experienced in conveying the memorial to the Prince. An interview was declined, first on account of indisposition, and afterwards owing to the death of a female child, which, according to native usage, rendered him for a time impure. In the meantime none of the ministers in attendance on the Court would touch the document, from their dread of Trimbukjee, and Mr. Elphinstone was obliged to forward it by the hand of a subordinate officer of the Residency, who was at first turned back ; but on repeated warnings to the minister in attendance of the responsibility he would incur by refusal the remonstrance was placed in the Prince's hand.

Then followed a scene of shuffling and evasion which showed how completely Bajee Rao identified himself with the Minister. Indeed, his conduct from the date of the murder was marked by abject terror, as if he anticipated retaliation on the part of the attendants of the Gykwar's embassy.

Even before the Shastree's death the Peshwa had adopted strong measures for the protection of his person, and they were redoubled after the murder. New troops were entertained and brought from a distance, and during the return journey his palankeen was surrounded by a thousand Carnatic peons, which

was the more remarkable as his custom hitherto had been to allow no troops to come within a certain distance of the line of march. He entered Poona in a closed palanquin, without giving notice of his approach, and without being met by any of his chiefs, and a strong force was instantly placed to guard his palace and the house of his Minister. Although the day of his arrival was a great festival, in which the whole inhabitants of Poona attended in great numbers, and the Peshwa had never before failed to be present, and distribute charity to many thousands of Brahmins, he remained secluded in his palace.

The communications with the Resident were what might be expected from a prince in a state of panic. There were promises of inquiry; promises to arrest and punish Trimbukjee, if the Resident would only produce the proofs of his guilt; declarations of unalterable fidelity to the British Government; and, when the tone of the Resident became peremptory, assurances were conveyed to him that the Peshwa would consent to his imprisonment, if the inquiry were carried no further. It was evident, so Mr. Elphinstone reported, that the Peshwa's fears were more for himself than for his Minister, and the Resident was enabled to give him some soothing assurance on that score. At the same time he gave notice that he should order the advance of the subsidiary force to the immediate proximity of the city, where it would remain till the surrender of the criminal.

The Peshwa now gave way. He had raised troops; he had made some show of resistance in the hopes of intimidating the Resident. As a last resource, the Minister was sent away to a neighbouring fort in nominal confinement; but the surrender was at last effected in compliance with the reiterated demands of the Resident, backed, as they were ultimately, by the authority of the Supreme Government.

The imprisonment of Trimbukjee did not last long. The mixture of precaution and carelessness in the arrangements for his custody raise doubts whether the Government attached any serious importance to his confinement. He was removed

to the fort of Tannah in the island of Salsette, within easy reach of the adherents and of the emissaries of his master, contrary to the expectations of the Peshwa, who suggested that he might be sent to Benares, and to the advice of Mr. Elphinstone, who suggested the fort of Allahabad or that of Chunar. The guard placed over him consisted entirely of British soldiers, from an apprehension that Sepoys might be tampered with. The plan for his escape proceeded almost undisturbed. A Mahratta, who had taken service with an officer of the garrison, used to lead his master's horse under the terrace where Trimbukjee was allowed to walk, and sang the intelligence he desired to convey, and in the ears of the English guard. A hole was effected in the wall of an outhouse that communicated with a stable, and Trimbukjee slipped away unperceived. Once at large, he betook himself to the hills, and for a few months was unheard of. The plot now began to thicken. Intelligence reached Mr. Elphinstone of gatherings of armed men. Old Mahratta plunderers took the field, and the country assumed an unsettled state without any interference on the part of the Government to check it. Trimbukjee himself was traced from point to point, and, on one occasion, information reached the Resident of an interview between the Prince and his old Minister, within seventeen miles of Poona, without any appearance of secrecy or concealment. Remonstrances were from time to time addressed to the Court, and were met by impudent denials of any assembly of troops; and on one occasion the Resident was desired, if he did believe these reports, to take his own measures. In fact, the language of the Peshwa's ministers from this time assumed a more peremptory tone, and this was backed by the levy of troops, in spite of the warnings of the Resident.

The Peshwa's aim was evidently to gain time, till he was prepared to throw off the mask. Time pressed, for the rainy season was at hand, during which military operations would have been carried on with difficulty in the hill country, where the insurgents were in force; and in the meantime an insurrection in Cuttack had interrupted the communication with

Calcutta, and obliged Mr. Elphinstone to act on his own sense of what the public service required.

Accordingly the subsidiary force which was on the northern frontier watching the movements of the Pindarrees was again put in motion. A part of it under Colonel Smith's command moved against the insurgents. Another force was summoned from the Madras territory, and the Poona brigade was desired to be on the alert to watch the movements of troops in the city, and defend the Residency.

Such was the state of matters on April 1. Bajee Rao had gone so far as to collect gun bullocks for the artillery at Poona, and send his treasures to the strong fort of Rygurgh. For a time Mr. Elphinstone hesitated whether he should not at once commence hostilities, and order an attack on the Prince in his palace; but motives of humanity, and a regard for the unoffending inhabitants of a great city, in case of a conflict in the streets, supported the public considerations which made him decide to avoid actual war against the Mahratta state without instructions from the Government.

An interesting memorandum has been placed in my hands by the late Lieutenant-General Briggs of his reminiscences of this crisis, and the copious extract which follows vividly describes the nature of the contest in which we were engaged:—

‘It appeared clear that Bajee Rao had made up his mind to embark in an extensive Mahratta confederacy against the English. His proceedings were conducted with the greatest secrecy, but they did not escape the vigilance of the Resident. In order to obtain intelligence of what the latter absolutely knew, and what he proposed doing, the Peshwa was lavish in promises and bribes to all whom he could seduce about the Residency. The doctor, who was in the habit of passing an hour every day with Mr. Elphinstone reading Greek and Italian, was supposed to be in his confidence, though he was only treated as a common friend. The Peshwa begged that the doctor might be sent to attend some members of his family; and the kindness that he there received, and the manner in which the Peshwa spoke of his fidelity and attachment to the

English, deceived the doctor till the day when war was declared. In the same manner he gained over the services of the English Commandant of the contingent, who, to the last hour, professed to believe that the Peshwa would never make war with us. This last gentleman received two lacs of rupees from Bajee Rao to obtain information of Trimbukjee and his proceedings; but it is only just to him to say, that he rendered an account of the manner in which he had employed part of it, when afterwards called on by Mr. Elphinstone to do so, and he then paid the balance into the Treasury. I joined Mr. Elphinstone as his third assistant early in 1816, and left him to take the field as Sir John Malcolm's assistant in July 1817; the other two assistants at Poona were Francis Whitworth Russell, the third son of Sir Henry Russell, Chief Justice in Bengal, and Henry Pottinger, afterwards well known as Sir Henry. My acquaintance with the languages induced Mr. Elphinstone at an early period to employ me in making translations of the numerous akhbars he was at that time in the habit of receiving from the native Courts of India, where he had established intelligencers, and his own previous acquaintance with the Ministers of India while Resident at Nagpoor, made him familiar with their characters and connections. At the time I speak of we had had regular postal communications with the several capitals of these chiefs; and as the whole of that department was under our own postmaster at Poona, it was not difficult in a great degree to depend on their reports, which were occasionally checked by sending a confidential agent along each line, under the plea of paying these intelligencers, and to report circumstantially the actual state of affairs. Bajee Rao's foreign communications were made either by means of camel hircarras, or by special foot messengers, whose progress was detected by the small javelins the latter carried, every Court having them painted differently, to enable them to command any necessary aid they might require on their route. This answered as a sort of livery, but was recognised only by the officials of the several princes. Similar javelins were used by the messengers of the bankers of the different

cities in the native states, but they were for the most part painted in one colour. In this way we, at Poona, obtained instant information of the entry of any of the messengers of foreign Courts that might pass our postal stations, and were enabled to be on the look-out for their arrival, as well as to trace the direction of any despatched by the Peshwa. As it was subsequently ascertained from the public records of his Government, that out of the million and a half sterling of revenue which Bajee Rao received, he laid by half a million annually, he must have had at his disposal in 1816-17 upwards of eight millions of treasure in jewels and in specie, and he was by no means parsimonious in dispensing it to effect any of his purposes. He laid himself out to gain over by bribery every servant of the Residency; but such was Mr. Elphinstone's vigilance that he was aware of those in the Peshwa's pay, and took care to make use of them for his own purpose. So complete was our information, that one of the charges made by Bajee Rao to Sir J. Malcolm, at Maholy, against Mr. Elphinstone, was, that he was so completely watched that the latter knew "the very dishes that were served at his meals."

'One night, after a day that had been passed in considerable anxiety, owing to reports of troops brought into the town, I received certain information that the cattle for the guns had been sent for, and had arrived an hour before; that the artillery were drawn up in front of the park; that the streets were full of mounted men; and that the Peshwa was in full durbar discussing with his chiefs the subject of immediate war. I hastened to inform Mr. Elphinstone, whom I found sitting in a large tent, engaged in playing a round game of cards with a party, among whom were several ladies. He saw me enter, and observed my anxiety to speak to him; but he continued his game as usual for half an hour, when, after handing the last lady of the party into her palankeen, he came up to me rubbing his hands, and said, "Well, what is it?" I told him the news, which he received with great *sang-froid*, and we walked together to the Residency office. There we

encountered the European Commandant of the contingent, above alluded to; on which Mr. Elphinstone asked him the latest news from the city. He appeared not to be aware of what was in progress, but observed that the Minister, whom he had just left, had told him that the Peshwa had discharged some of the troops lately enlisted, and that all was quiet. Mr. Elphinstone then called on me to state what I had heard, and distinctly told the Commandant that he did not believe a word that he said. The latter said that his information was from the *Minister himself*, and that as to the troops in the streets, he did not observe any beyond the usual patrols, and knew nothing about the arrival of gun bullocks. The moment was critical; the Residency was incapable of being properly defended, especially by the ordinary escort, and the idea of attacking the Peshwa at once from the cantonment, though hastily expressed, was subsequently abandoned. Mr. Elphinstone resolved to defer doing anything until the morning, and then to take such precautionary measures as he might deem proper. I believe that neither I nor he had much sleep during that anxious night. The night fortunately passed quietly; owing, as was said, to the opposition to war evinced by some of the ministers. Bajee Rao was physically an arrant coward; he had always displayed this weakness, and was not ashamed to avow it. No steps were therefore taken by either party during the night, but in the morning a requisition for a reinforcement was made, and two guns accompanied it to the Residency.

The Peshwa now took alarm. Having latterly declined all overtures for an interview with the Resident, he suddenly changed his tone, and invited the interview which he had so long refused, and endeavoured to overwhelm Mr. Elphinstone with a torrent of protestations and remonstrances. Some details of the conversation which ensued are given in the papers laid before Parliament; but they feebly report the scene as it has been described to me by General Briggs, who accompanied Mr. Elphinstone on that occasion. So eagerly did Bajee Rao pursue his argument that he, of all persons,

was the least likely to engage in hostility against a power to which he owed so much, that he even referred to his own want of courage in support of his assurances. 'How could one,' he said, 'so constitutionally timid as to be alarmed at the sound of cannon, who requires that no salute shall be fired till he has passed on to a certain distance, ever think of setting himself up as a warrior, and placing himself at the head of an army?' To such protestations Mr. Elphinstone had but to lay before him the overwhelming proofs that he possessed of the military preparations that were going on, and refer to the inaction of the Court as regards the insurgents, so inconsistent with its professions. These remonstrances, however, were unavailing to change the resolve of the Mahratta Prince. Motives of pride, a consciousness how much the guilt of the Minister was involved in his own, and perhaps some feeling of regard for him, strengthened him in his haughty resolve to refuse the concession demanded.

Remonstrance proving fruitless, Mr. Elphinstone prepared for action. He sent a written demand for the surrender of Trimbukjee and the immediate cession of three important forts as pledges that this would be carried out. Twenty-four hours were allowed to the Prince to come to a decision, and if the terms were not accepted hostilities would commence. On the other hand, every preparation was made to resist these demands, and it was hourly expected that the Prince would take the field; when suddenly this bold front was abandoned. The show of firmness gave way to the necessity of committing himself to an act of war, and after the usual shuffling and prayers for delay, the important message was sent announcing the acceptance of the terms demanded, and the order for the surrender of the cautionary forts was placed in British hands.

These events took place on May 6 and 7. On the 10th of the same month the instructions from Calcutta reached Poona, the absence of which had encouraged the Peshwa in his evasive and procrastinating policy. The rights of war are proverbially severe. The Peshwa's conduct gave us unquestionable right to exact penalties for acts of scarcely disguised

hostility, as well as to demand security for the future. The instructions of the Governor-General were:—to require the Peshwa to close at once all correspondence with foreign States, dismiss all vassals, acknowledge his complete dependence upon British power, coupled with the surrender of all claim to the titular headship of the Mahratta Empire. They further insisted upon the surrender of territory for the support of the subsidiary force, and called upon him to acknowledge on the face of the treaty his belief in Trimbukjee's guilt. These were certainly hard terms, and, it may be added, such humiliating conditions seem inconsistent with a desire to maintain Bajee Rao at the head of the State, and were sure to bring forth bitter fruit, unless stringent precautions were taken against a renewal of his hostility.¹

The above were the most favourable terms which the Resident felt authorised to propose as a condition of a renewal of the alliance, and when they were announced to the Prince they produced a renewal of his warlike preparations, so much so that on the night of the 13th of May everything was prepared for the Prince's departure from Poona to join the insurgents. His courage, however, again failed, and some measures were taken under his direct authority to expel the insurgents from the territory, and the adherents and family of Trimbukjee were placed under arrest. The so-called treaty of security was finally extorted from the sullen Prince. The restraint placed on the Peshwa was certainly of little value in the events which followed, and was not much relied upon by Mr. Elphinstone himself, whose opinion was expressed very decidedly that when we insisted on these humiliating conditions, we must be pre-

¹ The instructions provided for three contingencies. In case of the actual surrender of Trimbukjee, or sincere efforts being made to seize him, the usual relations with the Court were to be restored. In case of actual war, the person of the Prince was to be seized, and temporary arrangements were to be made for the government of the country. There remained the contingency of his inaction up to that time, or his further evasions, in which case the securities were to be insisted upon. The extreme course of seizing the titular head of the Mahrattas and occupying his territory would have proved very embarrassing to the Government at a time when it was preparing for operations extending over the whole of Central India.

pared for, and take precautions against, the enmity and open hostility of the Prince, should the state of India favour him; and this was evidently at the time the opinion of Lord Hastings himself.²

² I refer particularly to a despatch of April 12, in which the Governor-General recapitulates the conditions which it was deemed necessary to enforce, declaring his conviction that the Peshwa was engaged in a conspiracy hostile to British honour, and that henceforward our aim must be to strengthen our military position in the territory. He observes 'An enforced compliance, demanding effectual securities for our interests against its future operations, would be sure to leave a rankling animosity; our foresight must then be directed to the augmentation of the force in the country in our interests, reform of a part of the establishment, and placing it under British officers independent of the Peshwa.'

CHAPTER X.

CORRESPONDENCE, 1816.

I now revert to matters of personal interest, not touched upon in the preceding narrative. The journal which Mr. Elphinstone kept during the events described in the last chapter and in the year which followed contains very few allusions to Poona politics; nor does his correspondence with his friends, which was now much enlarged, enter much on his public work and anxieties. There was something repelling in the work in which he was engaged, and he turned with eagerness to the many topics of home or literary interest with which his letters abound. I have, therefore, thought it would be convenient not to interrupt the narrative of public events, which is drawn from Mr. Elphinstone's own despatches or from contemporary records, by the introduction of matters so diverse in character, and that it would be better to throw these selections from the letters into a separate chapter rather than attempt to weave together these discordant materials according to their respective dates.

During the year 1816, Mr. Elphinstone's correspondence was much extended, and embraced not merely matters of home and political interest, but those literary questions in which he was so much interested. Many of the letters contain frequent reference to the state of India, and to the ravages of the Pindarees, which had now reached such a height as to call for vigorous though tardy action on the part of the Government. These bands of adventurers formed the light cavalry of the Mahratta armies, and there are frequent allusions to their numbers and activity in Mr. Elphinstone's letters during the war of 1803. The Mahratta system of war gave ready employ-

ment to these soldiers of fortune, who accompanied the Peshwa's armies in their early conquests, obtained grants of land in Central India, and acquired with these possessions a certain political influence. Some of these chiefs commanded forces more or less organised, and played a part in the revolutionary days which preceded the fall of the Mogul Empire; but the greater part consisted of light cavalry that hung like clouds on the skirts of the armies to which they were opposed, and ravaged the country over which they spread. At the close of the war of 1805 these military adventurers commenced business on their own account, and gathered round them all the restless spirits that were cast loose by the reduction of the resources of the greater states, and by the extension of the subsidiary system. We have seen that Nagpoor was the first to suffer from their incursions, and in 1808 the celebrated Patan leader, Meer Khan, threatened the conquest of the Bosla's territory, and was only deterred by a prompt demonstration on the part of our Government. The growth of this formidable power is said to have been connived at, if not encouraged, by Sindia and Holkar. It is certain that the impunity that attended their raids gave them confidence in engaging in larger enterprises. On one occasion a large band penetrated to the British territory on the Ganges, while more formidable excursions were planned yearly on the Nerbudda, and extended their ravages to the Deckan for hundreds of miles southward, their track being marked throughout by excesses of the most revolting kind. Any attempt to stamp out the nuisance could only be effected by military operations on the largest scale, extending over the whole of Central India, with very little prospect of the co-operation of the leading states. Against such an enterprise the orders of the Home Government were peremptory, and for several years reliance was placed on defensive operations only. Large bodies of our troops were kept on the alert on the south-west frontier of Bengal, in Cuttack, and on the northern frontiers of the Poona and Hyderabad territories. But it was in vain. These

freebooters penetrated through the cordon of troops, and moved with a rapidity that defied pursuit. The British Government was at length roused from its torpor. As soon as the war in Nepal came to a close it became known in every Court in India that the whole resources of the Empire were to be put forth in furtherance of the great enterprise, with the probable result of the extension of British supremacy over the whole continent. Towards the close of 1816 the Governor-General came to the resolution of attacking the robber chieftains in their strongholds, but it was not till the close of the ensuing rainy season that active operations were commenced.

‘Poona, Feb. 15, 1816.

‘Dear Strachey,—We have had a great disturbance at Poona since I wrote to you. The Gykwar sent his Prime Minister, Gungadhur Shastree, to negotiate a settlement of his disputes with the Peshwa. There was a great deal of intrigue set up against him, both here and at Baroda, and in short he was murdered in the streets of Punderpoor (where he had gone on a pilgrimage with the Peshwa) by assassins employed by Trimbukjee Danglia, a Noojia, whom the Peshwa had made the Prime Minister, and to whom he was devoted to a degree that was quite surprising. I was at Ellora at the time, seeing the caves. I suspected Trimbukjee immediately, and set off for Poona. On my way I received proofs that satisfied me, and as Trimbukjee had the command of all the Peshwa’s forces and treasures, I thought it necessary to recall the subsidiary forces then at Jaulna. The Peshwa came back from Punderpoor and I accused Trimbukjee. The Peshwa refused to have him tried, and called in his troops. He got about 18,000 into Poona. Our brigade here was weak, ill-situated, without carriage or provisions, and at first ill-commanded. All this was rectified by degrees; two additional companies were sent to the Sungum, and we remained in an attitude of hostility for some time.

Not, however, so bad as in the Hegira at Bijapoor, for I got my ride every morning as in ordinary times. After a great deal of altercation the subsidiary force got to Seroor, and the advance (the Horse Artillery), one regiment of N.C., one light battalion, and all the flank companies, European and Native, came on to the other side of the Kirkee bridge, when at length Trimbukjee was given up. In September last our preparations were immediately laid aside, and some time after the Peshwa dispersed his troops, and everything is now quieter than before. I used to be constantly employed in resisting the encroachments and intrigues of the former Minister; and now I have time to read Cicero till twelve every day, and Herodotus with Jeffreys (the doctor) from six o'clock till dinner time. I hope my godson will know more Greek at ten than I do after twenty years' reading it, off and on. We have a hog hunt that goes out every second Wednesday, in the evening, to some place from ten to twenty miles off, hunts on Thursday, returning on Friday to breakfast. We hog-hunt till two, then tiff, and hawk or course till dusk. This has gone on since this time last year without inconvenience, except that I have lost the skin of my nose from the sun every time we have been out. We do not throw our spears in the old way, but poke with spears longer than the common ones, and never part with them. This, with officers from camp to breakfast and dinner (now and then), and occasional visitors from Bombay or Seroor, makes up our life, which is equally exempt from gaiety and melancholy. I shall now give you what news there is; if I have room and time I will tell you about Ellora, &c. The Pindarees are becoming very bold. One party last year passed near Seroor, threatened Punderpoor, swept round to the south of Hyderabad, approached the Kistna, struck the ceded districts into consternation, alarmed the people at Madras, returned towards the north along the frontier, and recrossed the Nerbudda loaded with plunder. The accounts of their camp after this expedition put one in mind of the first Mohammedan conquerors in India, or the Spaniards in America. One of the news-writers, when he

entered the camp, found a party dividing their booty of gold, jewels, and rich stuffs, and weighing a golden idol they had taken from some temple. We must be at them soon, but in the meantime it is thought we shall have another campaign against Nepal, the Goorkas having refused to ratify the treaty. Cutch has been subdued with little difficulty, as our force was strong—6,000 or 7,000 Native and European. We have got some cessions, but the great point gained is the putting a stop to the constant incursions that were made into the Gykwars' and our own territories in Guzerat. Young Holkar's army has mutinied, and he with his Court have fled to a hill fort, where they are protected by the troops of the Raja of Kota. The rest of India is *in statu quo*. The Sikhs, not deterred by their disastrous attempt last year, are going to make another attack on Cashmere. The Vizier of Cabul has marched to Attock to attack them; but it is curious to see what remote causes affect politics. The French war having induced the Russians to make a truce with Persia, that power is disengaged, and has now sent a force towards Herat, while, on the other hand, the Emperor of China, having threatened the frontier of Cokaun or Ferghana, has led the Khan of that country to make peace with the King of Bokhara, which monarch has resolved to fill up his leisure time by supporting old Shah Zemaun in an attempt to recover the crown of Cabul. The real motive probably is a wish to get Balkh, as all the inhabitants are Uzbegs, and their present subjection to Cabul is but loose. This will call back the Vizier, and leave the Sikhs unmolested.

‘I have a half mind to go home overland and try to come out in Council. I believe I should do so if I had never read Mother Hubbard's tale, and learned ‘what hell it is in suing long to bide.’ It is carrying coals to Newcastle to write to you about English news, but one cannot help exulting in the present greatness of the nation. (We have just received the details of Bonaparte's arrival in England, or rather on the shores.) I used often to envy every individual Frenchman his share of their glory, and now we have taken their place, and they are suffering from the allies all those evils which they formerly inflicted

without provocation: ἂ οὐ τιμωρούμενοι ἐποίησαν, ἀλλὰ καὶ διὰ τὴν ὕβριν ἡδίκουν ἀνθρώπους μικροπολίτας.¹

‘I hope you are not such a citizen of the world as not to be delighted. Still, I sympathise with Bonaparte, and look on his firmness and serenity in misfortune with admiration. Write me about my books if you have not done so yet. Remember me kindly to Mrs. Strachey and the Bullers, and to Henry Strachey and Ernst if you see them, and *Vale!*—M. E. Speaking of our success in Europe, read the “Tatler,” No. 130,² and smile at the events that were thought great in those days, and which we till lately never hoped to see equalled.—M. E.’

Lady Hood, to whom the following letter is addressed, was the eldest daughter and co-heir of the last Lord Seaforth. She married, first, Admiral Sir Samuel Hood, K.B., and, secondly, the Right Honourable James Alexander Stewart, grandson of the sixth Earl of Galloway, who assumed the name of Stewart-Mackenzie. He was Governor of Ceylon, and afterwards Lord High Commissioner of the Ionian Islands:—

‘Poona, April 27, 1816.

‘My dear Lady Hood,—I am very happy that I finished my last despatch to you when I did (although I have no opportunity of sending it off). I should otherwise have felt as much shame as gratitude this morning when your letters of August 15 and

¹ ‘What they did unprovoked, from mere insolence, acting unjustly to the smaller cities’—Xenophon, *Hellenics*, ii.

² This paper is dated February 6, 1709. The passage which Mr. Elphinstone had in his mind was probably the following:—

‘Methinks a man cannot without a secret satisfaction consider the glory of the present age, which will shine as bright as any other in the history of mankind. It is still big with great events, and has already produced changes and revolutions which will be as much admired by posterity as any that have happened in the *days of our forefathers or in the old time before them*. We have seen kingdoms divided and united: monarchs elected and deposed: nations transferred from one sovereign to another; conquerors raised to such a greatness as has given a terror to Europe, and thrown down by such a fall as has moved their pity.

‘But it is a still more pleasing view to an Englishman to see his own country give the chief influence to so illustrious an age, and stand in the strongest point of light amidst the diffused glory that surrounds it.’

September 26 were put into my hands. As it is, I read them with unmixed pleasure and with a strong sense of your kindness in thinking so often of such distant friends. My satisfaction was not even damped by your account of the effects of my travels, for, tender as the nerves of authors are known to be, this unanswerable proof of the dullness of my works had no effect but that of giving me a very hearty laugh. I do not know whether this was owing to your skilful way of communicating unwelcome tidings, or to my being fully prepared for such a judgment by my own reflections, but I fancy both had their share in occasioning my philosophical reception of such appalling intelligence. The fact is, one gets so much interested in subjects that long occupy one's attention, that the possibility of the world taking less pleasure in them never occurs till after the book is finished. I had, however, some feelings of compassion for my readers, and Basil Hall can tell I wanted to have cut out one half of my book; but the gods decreed it otherwise, and I was destined to close the bright eyes of the most ardent of inquirers, even on the stony ridge of Cary Arick. Your account of my travels is the only one I have received, since they first went home, except a note from Sir J. Mackintosh acknowledging their arrival. I have long surmised that my friends thought them a delicate subject to touch on, and that the less that was said about them the better. However, they have got to be reviewed yet, and I have to read most facetious descriptions of the yarns of the reviewers, and sly intimations of a wish that travellers would proportion their narratives to the limited duration of human life since the flood, and that they would not contrive to make a work of greater time and labour to follow their peregrinations on paper than to explore in person the countries they describe. I wish you had said something about your own travels, which I am sure, whatever other faults they may have, will not be dull. I am led by one word, "brother author," to hope that they are not abandoned, but on looking at the word again I am half afraid it is "*Northern* author." If the travels are in progress, it cannot long remain a matter of doubt, as we must soon hear enough of them. Perhaps your

duties as a chieftain and landholder may interfere with your literary labours. I was delighted with your account of your life and intentions. Your having entered on such plans, after all the varieties you have been used to, commands the highest respect. If you persevere it will be more than heroic, but, like everything else of romantic merit, it does not easily obtain belief. Before I proceed any further in my letter, I must take the privilege of my age in returning my best love to the young lady who thought me sixty. I hope you told her I was gay, blooming, and twenty-five. Your account of the coldness of English landscape reminds me of Corinne. I look forward to it with some dread, but with much more to the tameness and littleness of nature, which to a person in this country, where almost all your pleasures are derived from occasional enjoyment of fine scenery, presents a most comfortless prospect for the evening of his days; but in England this is of less consequence, as the bustle of society and the variety of amusements must pretty fully occupy your hours of leisure, and leave no time and little wish "to gaze on the clouds and to smell the dandelions," as Sydney Smith very elegantly expresses it. I do not much admire Walter Scott's first letter, or indeed any part of his journey. There is something so much beneath the dignity of so great a poet in posting over to Waterloo for materials for a saleable epic poem, like a fourth-rate landscape painter setting off to the lakes to sketch for the print shops. In fact, the whole idea of getting up an occasional epic is an affront to the Muse, "who deigns her nightly visitation unimplored," and can never be followed by her inspiration. How is Walter Scott to make a poem where every event and every gesture of the heroes is so well known as to leave no room for fiction, and where the reality was so interesting that the effect of the most poetical description will seem cold to the feelings. We recollect to have been excited by the "Gazette," and, as if there were not difficulties enough, the poet must first exhaust himself in those letters before he sits down to pour forth the overflowings of his heart in song. The child of fancy was flattered beyond measure by your recollection, in which I sympathised with him.

Close is now resident in Sindia's camp. I cannot help thinking how your memory would contribute to the liveliness as well as accuracy of your travels, which I hope are now in the press. There must be some limits to your patience and therefore to my perseverance.

‘I am, yours very sincerely,

‘M. ELPHINSTONE.’

(To Lord Keith.)

‘Poona, April 27, 1816

‘My dear Uncle,—I read the newspaper accounts of your intercourse with Bonaparte with the greatest interest. I could not expect the recital you allude to from you, but I could wish some of my sisters had been within hearing to have given me a more authentic detail. You were fortunate in being able to have so close a view of so eminent a person in so trying a crisis. I could almost give up the pleasure I promise myself in going home overland (when I do go), if I was sure that by going by sea I should have a view of Bonaparte even in the calm of his retirement at St. Helena. Not that I admire anything about him but his talents.

‘We have finished the war with the Goorkhas, whose courage, combined with the strength of their country, made them formidable enemies, and we are waiting to see what is to be done to protect our provinces against the Pindarrees. These are a band of predatory horse who formerly acted as free troops under the native Governments, but lost their employment in consequence of the limits we put to predatory war. The reduced means of the Mahratta Governments also threw many of their regular cavalry out of service, and these, joined to the former Pindarrees, now form a horde of about 25,000 or 30,000 freebooters, who inhabit the centre of India, and carry their incursions to the distance of 500 or 600 miles from their own seats. They lately penetrated through the Nizam's country into the provinces of the Madras Government, and after spreading alarm to Madras they retired through the territories of the Nizam and the Peshwa. These proceedings cannot be suffered without ruin to our reputation, on which our power in India

depends. Yet they can scarcely be stopped without a general war, and at such a time there are reports of the removal of Lord Moira, which, if it is true, must retard our operations for a year, at least, till the new Governor-General feels at home in his station.'

(To Captain Close.)

• Poona, June 8, 1816

'My dear Close,—I have just received your letter of the 27th. The despatches it encloses are admirable, especially that of the 26th. The views they display are clear, consistent, and decided, and the effect cannot but be excellent. To me the intention of spiring up the G. G., and preparing him to disregard menace is very obvious, but to most other readers (perhaps to any reader that had not talked the subject over with you), there will appear to be no design, beyond stating the truth as it stands. That it is the truth is of course its first merit, but particular circumstances required to be firmly established, and placed in a strong light, which has been most satisfactorily performed. It is a proof of our old doctrine of the immense advantage of a familiar knowledge of all the Durbars in India. After reading your despatch, I think the chances are against a war, and if there be a war, I do not think it can be formidable; but a vigorous and persevering Pindarree hunt will be required. Our attention is at present attracted to the great Powers, and those freebooters are thrown into the shade; but they must give us a hard campaign yet before we get rid of them. As to what you say of your "never putting anything out of hand that you have not reason to be dissatisfied with," if you mean that everything you write falls short of your idea of perfection, I fancy the complaint is pretty general, at least among men of sense; but if you mean that your dissatisfaction is produced by the result of your advice or predictions, I do not perceive on what your opinion is founded. If it were well founded, it ought to make no change in your practice. There can be nothing more destructive of all enterprise and energy than an over-anxiety to avoid mistakes. If

the general tendency of your conduct and opinions be right, fifty petty failures do no mischief. At all events you are not likely to err on the side of being too speculative; and old age (which is fast approaching) will lessen the risk, small as it is even now. You omitted to send the enclosures alluded to in your letter to Lord Moira. My letter about Dewree was written to take advantage of an opportunity of showing one branch of the vices of the system of 1806. No occasion of that kind ought to be omitted.

‘Ever yours,

‘M. ELPHINSTONE.

‘P.S.—I read nothing now but Ovid, whom I like much better than I expected. Malcolm’s “History” is grave, sober, judicious, philosophical. Not a trace of *Jack* Malcolm in it. It seems really a work of great merit. It supports the Greeks against Richardson and Jones, and makes out very plausibly the agreement between them and the Persian writers.

‘M. E.’

(*W. Erskine, Esq.*)

‘Poona, August 26, 1816.

‘My dear Sir,—I should take shame to myself for the long time I have kept “Baber,” if the detention of him had been at all voluntary; but, as I was prevented reading him, and interrupted after I had begun by more unpleasant occupations, I have only to regret the delay that has happened, and to hope that it will not interfere with the despatch of the papers to Europe. I have at length despatched the whole, together with your Persian Baber and the Toorkee one, which is better in your hands than mine. I have kept the Delhi copy, principally because it is not worth sending; otherwise it was made for you and is of no use. I kept your Persian copy always by me that I might not put it out of my power to go on with the comparison of the translation, and in consequence I could not get the correction of my own copy accomplished. When the English is fairly off for England I should be much obliged if you would let me have the book again, and

I will get my own completed ; or if a good *Kautib*³ is to be had in Bombay I will get a copy made there. I was very much delighted with most parts of this batch. The journal part certainly falls short of the rest, and there is a circumstance in one of the supplements that has a bad effect on the narrative by weakening the implicit confidence in Baber's candour and veracity, which his frank way of writing is so well calculated to command. The circumstance is the false colour that he appears to have put on his connection with the Prince of Hind, of whose name he seems to have made use. The dependence on the Persians, which he appears to have acknowledged, also hurts his character for spirit ; and although the truth must be told when it is ascertained, I would not put in either of these stories on doubtful authority. You may think this carrying my zeal for Baber a little too far ; but he certainly deserves all sorts of fair play in return for the masterly picture he has given us of his age and nation. His description of India is excellent. It seems to have made much the same impression on him that it does on us when we first arrive. His characters, as usual, are admirable, and as they include all ranks and descriptions of people, they serve, like Chaucer's pilgrims, to make us almost as familiar with his contemporaries as we are with our own. By-the-bye, it gives a high notion of the times to find painters and musicians described along with the learned and great of the age. But the best thing about Baber is his heart. It appears, as you observe, in every part of his memoirs, but in none more than in his letter to Khojeh Kilan. I doubt much whether there has been a crowned head since Henri Quatre who was capable of feeling as Baber did on tasting the melon, or of expressing his sentiments (especially to a subject) with the frankness and warmth of that letter. The notes I have made do not correspond in importance to the length of time I have been about them. I was not able to go over all the Persian, but I examined every place where the English seemed doubtful, and especially all that you had marked as questionable. I am

³ Scribe.

afraid I have generally left the difficulties where I found them, while, like a good commentator, I have furnished you with elaborate explanations of everything that was clear before.'

(*To Sir John Malcolm.*)

‘Poona, September 11, 1816.

‘My dear Malcolm,—I have several letters of yours to answer, and many thanks to give you for your frequent letters at the time when my book was coming out, and when it was so interesting to me to hear how things were going on; but I must first discharge the task you have imposed on me of criticising your book.

‘It is of course my principal business to point out the defects, as the beauties require no alteration; but I cannot help saying how much I was delighted with the production. It possesses in an eminent degree the knowledge of human nature and of Asia, which is the fundamental quality of an historian of Persia; and to this it adds proof of great research, and of a talent for presenting the characters, manners, and actions of nations and of individuals in the most animated and interesting forms. We now possess a clear, complete, intelligible, credible, and readable history of Persia in all ages—a work which it required a union of so many qualities to produce, that I scarcely ever expected to have seen it accomplished.

‘Notwithstanding the great size of the book and the characteristic monotony of Asiatic history, I never for a moment felt the volume too long. I read it with always increasing interest, and finished it with regret. The fabulous and heroic times were very difficult to manage, and have been extremely well executed. Great good sense is shown in weighing the scanty authorities and in reducing the fables to rational dimensions. I was particularly interested by the seventh chapter, which shows great learning, ingenuity, and judgment. The view of the government and manners of the ancient Persians, and the estimate of their merit, is very complete; and the scepticism with which their supposed prosperity and civilisation are ex-

amined is perfectly philosophical. What pleased me most was the conjecture that the long reign of Zohauk represents the whole duration of the Assyrian monarchy. It is well supported by the arguments you bring, and coincides surprisingly with other traditions about Zohauk. For instance, the descent of the Affghan kings from Zohauk appears at first entirely inconsistent with their descent from the Jews, though both are asserted on the same authority—that of the Persians; but the incongruity disappears if we suppose Zohauk to stand for the monarch of the Assyrians, who, by transporting the Jews to Ghore, occasioned the first appearance of the Affghan nation in their present seats. It is a curious circumstance connected with the theory that the King of Caubul in Zal's time is said to have been of the race of Zohauk. This coincidence would be in favour of the connection between Zohauk and Assyria, even if the Jewish descent of the Affghans were false, since it would show that such a connection was supposed by the Persians who invented the story.

‘Another thing that gave me great satisfaction in your seventh chapter was the general respect with which you treated the ancients, an honourable contrast to the vulgar trick that has been practised in late days of seeking the praise of acuteness by attempting to undervalue them. Your own narrative establishes the truth of the Greek histories. Those of the Persians agree with them in many particulars, and where they do not they are so improbable that they would be set aside even if there were no Greek authors to contradict them. The two accounts coincide in the stories of Cyrus, Artaxerxes Longimanus, and Darius Codomannus, and you have been very successful in reconciling the contradictory accounts of the intervening periods. The supposition that Xerxes and Isfendiar are the same is very ingenious. In one point I think you allow a little too much weight to ancient testimony. It is where Herodotus speaks of the religion of the ancient Persians (page 197). I do not understand him to speak so positively about his own knowledge as you represent him. I rather conceive him to mean that the account he gives is to the best of his knowledge. As

if he had said, "*I understand* the Persians to practise the following institutions." If you think he is so positive, you must take all the disadvantage of his authority against you; for your idea that he alludes to the religion of Persia in times previous to his own is not borne out by the text. I understand him to say that the Persians worship the sun and moon, earth, fire, water, the winds, and Urania—the six first from ancient times, and the last from more recent. But whatever Herodotus may have said, he was very likely to be wrong on such a subject. I think it is Dr. Feyer who says of the religion of this country that the Gentiles worship Mars, Apollo, and the Devil, and he had as good opportunities of knowing the Hindoo religion as Herodotus had of knowing that of the Persians. . . .

'I give you all these verbal criticisms to show you that I have been industrious, though they are of little consequence in themselves. By-the-bye, you say Peshawur contains 10,000 inhabitants. It ought to be 100,000. It would be an improvement if you would give some account of every history you quote, to show the claim it has to credit. You have sometimes omitted to state your authorities; for instance, for the limits of the empire of Nousheerwan. There are a few cases in which I think you have too readily followed particular authorities.

'The description of the Tartars—the whole nation wandering and fighting from one end of Tartary to the other—seems fanciful, and unlike the present state of things. The harangue put into the mouth of Agha Mobarik (page 586) is not probable. The Mussulmans have not the notion of the sanctity of the claims of primogeniture, nor the enthusiastic loyalty that would dictate such a speech; and if they had, they do not take notes of their speeches so as to give a tolerable appearance of authenticity to that you have published. I fancy you have got the harangue from Kousinski. By-the-bye, it is strange how you and I differ about that author. I forget the grounds of my opinion, but it was very decided. Are you certain that Hanway took his history from Kousinski? If he did, he must have greatly altered it from his own knowledge and judgment.

‘The story of the murder of the Governor of Herat (page 607) must, I think, be from the same source. The Governor and all his suite cut off so effectually that not one escapes to tell the tale, and so quietly that no suspicion is excited in the neighbourhood, and the deception of the town’s-people by the appearance of the murderers dressed in the bloody garments of their victims, is too romantic for history. The history of the Suffavees, however, is in general exceedingly well told ; nothing worth knowing is left out, and yet the interest never flags. The Affghan invasion is particularly well related.

‘I now come to my great ground of complaint against your history, which I admire so much in most respects. It is the tone of apology for all the acts of cruelty and tyranny that prevails throughout the work.

‘I certainly do not expect commonplace declamation against despotism and murder, but some abhorrence ought to be expressed against both, and at all events neither ought to be defended. You observe very justly that, in Asiatic countries, it is the duty of the king to punish all crimes, and that we must not regard all the executions he orders as mere effects of caprice, nor yet think his sentences unjust because the forms are different from ours. We will allow a despot his summary and severe decisions ; we will dispense with all form in his mode of administering justice, provided it be justice that he administers ; we will even allow for casual injustice, the necessary result of summary proceedings ; but we must never forget that there is an immutable distinction between just and unjust, which no systems nor opinions can remove. On this principle I object to the apology for Shah Abbass at the end of his reign.

‘Nobody would blame Abbass for putting to death a *guilty* son, but we blame him for putting to death a son whom you have shown to have been innocent. You say the son might have been guilty, and the crime of Abbass might have been necessary to prevent great misery to the empire. If this were the case, it is not a crime at all, but an act of duty. You ought to decide which it is, and treat it accordingly ; but we ought never to lessen the distance between right and wrong.

‘You say we ought not to judge too harshly of so great a prince ; but the way to judge of him is to put in the strongest light his numerous great qualities and heroic actions, and to leave his crimes to the detestation they merit. The same fault appears in the reign of Nadir Shah, and especially in the massacre at Delhi, the defence of which forms a contrast to the horror expressed at similar barbarities when the sufferers are Persians ; but it is in Agha Mohammed’s reign that it appears in most excess. Agha Mohammed, by your own *narrative* as well as by all the other accounts I have heard, appears to have been the most detestable monster that ever appeared in human shape, and yet you rather speak of him on the whole with approbation.

‘This may partly be owing to a wish to avoid putting it in the power of a French or Russian ambassador to prejudice the present king against you, and against the nation, and I was struck with the propriety of your leaving out this king’s reign, and avoiding everything that would create enmity in Persia. I wish I had been as prudent, though in my case the danger is more remote. To return. The terror struck by the murder of Aly Khan is mentioned as strengthening Agha Mohammed’s cause ; but surely the distrust excited by his treachery to that nobleman must have done him more harm, than that terror did him good. It is a bad plan to point out great crimes as good policy, which is seldom true, even on the narrowest view. The attempt to describe the condition of the slaves carried from Georgia as agreeable, and the temper with which Agha Mohammed’s cruelty is borne, while Shah Rokh’s obstinacy is so severely censured, fall under the same observations, and the massacre at Kirmaun still more than either of them. We never blame a conqueror when the peaceable inhabitants suffer in the assault of a town, because we know it to be a necessary evil ; but surely we ought to detest a tyrant who purposely and in cold blood orders the innocent to suffer with the guilty, and who carries his cruelty against them to an excess for which even their guilt would be no sort of excuse. You frequently say that these severities were necessary for quieting Persia ; but,

even if this were the case, peace may be too dearly purchased ; and surely a few years of gloomy tranquillity under a despotic government are but a poor compensation for the horrors of such a reign as Agha Mohammed's, and for the degradation of the national character during many ages that must follow such a system. Besides, I really think the immediate policy of this course is as bad as the morality. Nadir and the family of Zend founded empires by moderation, which they lost by cruelty ; and Shah Moraud and Ahmed Shah, without any of the monstrous barbarities of Agha Mohammed, established governments which are likely to last as long as that of the Kajars. I must own, after all this, that you have not always defended tyrants ; your character of Timour, for instance, is very just, and was required after the attempts that have been made to put him on a level with Alexander. Most of these remarks are commonplace enough, but they are not the less true. Indeed, I observe that almost all your readers object to the parts of your history I have been pointing out ; although, in other respects, they all concur in applauding it. Even ladies are quite delighted with it as a book of amusement. It is indeed a characteristic of the book that it is so entertaining. The chapter on religion is least so, but the following chapters completely recover their character. The general account of Persia in the twenty-fourth chapter is clear, concise, amusing, and instructive. The twenty-third also is admirable. It is brief and animated, and presents a vivid and varied picture of the different communities that are to be found in Persia. On the whole the work is well worthý of its success. It must add greatly to your reputation, and probably even more in permanence than in immediate diffusion. You see I have written you a very careful, and I am sure a sufficiently sincere review. My remarks have been confined to particular points, because I was unacquainted with the subject, and read to learn, rather than to criticise ; but, if all your friends write you as fully, and you have patience to read all their disquisitions, it will be strange if many faults are left in the second edition. I have to complain of *my* friends that they have given me no hints whatever ; and even the "Quarterly," though it finds

fault in general terms, points out nothing specific that I could mend. It strikes me the radical defect is tediousness, and that it is most apparent in the book on the Tribes. I might remedy this by reducing the size ; but this would be more trouble than it is worth.

‘This letter has run to such a length that news is out of the question. I shall send it to your brother to forward where he thinks best. I beg to be kindly remembered to Lady M. I hear Tina has come to the Cape with Sir Pulteney. I wish they would come on to India. ‘Ever yours, &c.,

‘M. ELPHINSTONE.’

(To Major Vans Kennedy.)

‘Poona, September 16, 1816.

‘My dear Sir,—I was much obliged to you for the enclosure to your letter of the 30th, and I should have answered it sooner if I had not wished to give the translation a fair and uninterrupted perusal. I should like even now to go over it again and compare it with the Persian ; but as you will have heard that Trimbukjee has got loose, I think it best to give you at once such remarks as occur to me, and avoid the chance of being prevented by some disturbances that may take up both my time and yours. You could not have applied to a person less competent to give you an opinion on the present subject than I. I have read very little of Ferdousi, or indeed of any Persian poetry except Hafiz and the Bostan, and from the little I do know of Ferdousi, I have always entertained an opinion that it is impossible to translate him into English. These circumstances disqualify me from judging of your translation, and render the sincerity of my opinion (the only thing that remains to recommend it) of little value. It is, however, worth your while to consider the doubt I suggest as to the possibility of translating Ferdousi, that the translator may not be blamed for what is inherent in his undertaking. One thing strikes me as an insuperable difficulty in making Ferdousi agreeable in an English dress. It is the obvious contrast

between the Persian ways of thinking, acting, and expressing themselves, and our own. This is little felt when the poem is read in Persian, because it is expected, and because the reader is familiar with his author's manner of thinking; but in an English translation it strikes even those who have been used to it in Persian, and must do so in a much greater degree with a reader who has no previous acquaintance with Asiatic writers. The intrinsic merit of the poet will not avail him in these circumstances, any more than the unquestioned elegance of Persian manners would enable a nobleman from Teheran to preserve any degree of grace or dignity in a court suit of the French cut. It is only an extension of this remark to say that there is a similar inconsistency in the poetical diction of the two nations. The established language of our heroic verse has so close a connection with that of the ancients that it cannot be employed without exciting some of the ideas belonging to the *Iliad* and the *Æneid*, which of course mix ill with those peculiar to Persian poetry. On the other hand, the figures natural to the Persian can never be made agreeable to European imaginations. Of this nature are "lovely moon," "strong as a camel," "tall as an elephant," "black as musk," and yet if you leave these out you lose all likeness to your author; and if you endeavoured to soften them by circumlocutions your language must unavoidably become cumbrous and feeble. These observations are not suggested by your translation, and though they are not new, they may very likely be erroneous. They are worth mentioning, however, as so many translations have failed. By-the-bye, those failures are very much against you, as they have taken from the novelty of your author, and have at the same time raised prejudices against him. The very episode you have chosen was published about two years ago by a Mr. Atkinson in Calcutta. I have been careful to show you the bad side of everything, both in compliance with your desire, and because it is the duty of anyone who is consulted before publication; but it is not for want of a good side to present, for I received great pleasure from the perusal of the whole of your poem, and was particularly

struck with the success of some parts. I cannot concur in the preference of Ferdousi to Homer, but there are other opinions to which I would readily subscribe, and all are set forth with perspicuity and force. You are too hard on Malcolm, who is himself a great admirer of Ferdousi, and who had at one time thoughts of publishing some poetical translations he has made from different parts of the "Shah Nameh." He is, however, no great Persian scholar, and does not set up for a judge of their literature. Your indignation at him was natural when he made so public an attack on your favourite. I never before heard the remark you make about the change in the Persian style after the age of Shah Abbass; it is, I should think, correct, and is certainly important. It is a great pity Ferdousi's satire should be defaced by all that cant about Aly. Can it not have been interpolated subsequently to the establishment of the Sheeah religion in Persia? I hope your translations from the "Shah Nameh" have not made you renounce your historical plans. I should imagine there must be many histories in Persian that would afford rich materials to a judicious writer, and there are certainly many eras in Asiatic story well worthy of illustration. You see I have not benefited by your remarks on the hardship of listening to other people's productions, or I should not have imposed on you the task of getting through this long dissertation.

'Believe me, &c.,

'M. ELPHINSTONE.'

(*To W. Erskine, Esq.*)

'Poona, Sept. 23, 1816.

'My dear Sir,—The same day that I received your letter of the 11th brought me the news of Trimbukjee's escape, which, although it has led to nothing as yet, required many precautions and led to many inquiries. This must be my excuse for not having earlier replied to a communication for which I owe so many acknowledgments. I was very much gratified by what you say of me in your preface, though I could not flatter myself I had deserved it. It has been said that

authors only get half the praise that is their due, as the public does not know how much they have suppressed. I am likely to be an exception to that rule, and to get more credit for the information on which I forbore to write, than for anything I have written or am ever likely to produce. With regard to the separate letter, the only objection I have to make to it is that you have done me a great deal too much honour; and these have become so many words of course that it is in vain to use them even when perfectly sincere.

‘I hope, however, that you will believe I attach their full meaning to my words when I assure you that I am most sensible of the kindness with which you have mentioned me, and that there are very few of whose favourable opinion I should be so proud. The remarks on the Tartar tribes and on Toorkestan are exceedingly interesting; I wish they were much longer. I do not think that anything required by your subject is left out; but one’s curiosity is excited about Tartary, and one regrets that you have not placed the Manshurs and all Chinese Toorkestan in the same clear light in which we now see everything on this side of Imaus. The regret is certainly unreasonable, as your object was to illustrate Baber; but the introduction is so entertaining as well as instructive that I am certain you might have doubled its size without any reader complaining of the introduction of matter not immediately connected with the subject. You will suppose from this that I do not think the discussion about the Tartars too long. It is indeed essential to your purpose. The name seems certainly to be unknown to the Turks. The Persians—or rather some Persian authors, I believe—make use of it in the general way that is done in Europe.

‘By-the-bye, although what you say of the peculiar physiognomy of the Moguls agrees entirely with the notions that I have formed of them, I am a little puzzled by a passage in Van Braam, who saw some Mogul ambassadors at Peking, and they had so completely the appearance of Europeans that the first time he saw them he took them for the missionaries who he knew were at the Court. It is doing a great service to dis-

criminate the great Tartar races in such a manner as to prevent their being again confounded, and you have done it effectually for the Toorks and Moguls. The fact of the breeds mixing in some instances removes many difficulties and apparent inconsistencies.

‘The Manshurs do not seem to have required so much attention, not having been confounded with the others. Who are the principal inhabitants of Siberia? Who were the Oighurs? Did you ever read Wilford’s paper on Mount Caucasus? It contains a good deal on the subject of the people called Kas, to whom you allude, and though, like all Wilford’s works, full of absurdities, it is also full of curious particulars. If all Wilford’s knowledge could be removed into a rational head, a great deal of good might be made out of it which at present there is no chance of. You mention the Toorkamans as under Khwarizm. Are not part under Bokhara and some connected with Persia, or rather with the King of Persia in his quality of Kajur? The part of Belochistan where the Soliman range ends can hardly be called a desert. These are all the faults I can find in the prolegomena, unless you will allow it to be a fault that you avoid using the European names for rivers, &c., which you have occasion to mention. They would enable the reader to connect his former knowledge with what he is now taught, and would also have the advantage of more stability than the modern names. The Oxus, for instance, at different times and places has been called the “Ishoon,” the Hamu, the Amu, the “Penj,” and the “Harat.”

‘Before I close my criticisms, I must observe that I have always been puzzled about the rise of Khûsru Shah; whether anything more is required in the introduction to make it clear, or whether the apparent confusion is owing to the way in which I read the memoirs, I cannot say, but it is as well to suggest the questions. You express a wish for Caufir vocabularies. If you like I can send you some, and likewise a Lughmanee vocabulary. Irvine sent specimens of a great many of these languages to Sir J. Mackintosh, who I understood had made them over to Leyden. It would be a pity if they were lost; but, if they are,

perhaps Irvine might yet replace them. The Advocates' Library would be a very good place for the Toorkee papers; but you are the best judge. I should be very much obliged to you for a sight of your paper on Khwarizm, if you can without any inconvenience spare it; if not, I hope soon to read it in print. I assure you I feel none of the pleasure you suppose in parting with Baber. I am pleased that he is near the press; but otherwise the little trouble I have had with him never equalled the pleasure I had in reading his story, and if it had been ten times as much, it would have been more than repaid by the notice you have taken of it. I do, however, half regret that even Baber was undertaken when I recollect the time he has occupied and the advantage to which you might have employed it. I hope you have some greater design in contemplation now that your hands are free. If it should still be Aurungzebe, I may perhaps be useful in getting you Mahratta papers. I believe I could get access to many letters and public documents of Sahoo's reign.—Yours, &c. 'M. E.'

The next letter in my series is in answer to one that is referred to in his journal in the following entry. It adds to my regret that so few of his letters to his own family have been preserved.

'*September 7.*—Letters from Clemy and Mr. Stark; the former written in the beginning of April. These letters awakened a crowd of recollections, mostly delightful, but all partaking of melancholy. The news of the destruction of the wee house, Shrub Mount, &c., was most painful. I really felt as if I had lost old friends. I could almost add a year to my stay in the country to see them again. The affection of all my friends would have given me unmixed pleasure, but from the thoughts of the change in them since we met, and the time that was yet to elapse before we saw them. There was another person with whose remembrance of me I was enchanted, and whose name recalled many days of real happiness and many romantic dreams.'

‘ Poona, November 22, 1816

‘ My dearest Clemy,—I received your letter of April 2 about three weeks ago. I do not know how it came, but not by Mrs. Buller, who has remained at home. Her husband arrived in Bengal some time since. I was very much gratified by what you said of my book, though you would see it with partial eyes, and every one else would put it in its best light to you. The palms at Cohaut excited exactly the recollections you suppose, and owed their attractions to the times and scenes they recalled. I really was shocked to hear of the devastation that you describe in the garden, and felt almost as if I had heard of the death of an old friend. All accounts of changes at home are disagreeable, as they remind me of an idea that is apt to occur of itself, when I happen to be in bad spirits, that the separation between us in this country and our friends is even more real than apparent, and that we are keeping up an imaginary attachment to imaginary persons and places, which have now no real existence. The names may be the same, but the appearance, the character, and the feelings towards ourselves and everything else are entirely altered. It seems as if when we first left our family and country, we had quitted them for ever, and have to begin a new life among new people on our return. These are comfortless reflections. I hope they are in great measure unfounded, and that the force of early recollections, and the number of objects of interest that are common to us and to our friends at home will enable us to enter into their feelings, and prevent our being absolute strangers when we get back to Europe. Still, I would give a good sum to have the garden restored to its former condition, and I can scarce help feeling angry at Charles for allowing it to be broken up. I fancy, however, he is too much pushed for money to be able to consider what pretty places are destroyed in obtaining it. I hope the Moat, Robert’s road and the rest of the North wood have not shared in the devastation. I sometimes feel very strongly tempted to make a journey home overland to see all these old places, and to renew my acquaintance with all my old friends. I wish I had done so earlier, and I should then

have been certain of finding myself really *at home* when I go back for good ; but to do it now, when I am at last beginning to save money after so many years of neglect and mismanagement, would be too great a sacrifice, and would detain me in India till I was nearer fifty than forty. I was much delighted with Mr. Stark's letter, and still more with the prosperous circumstances in which it describes himself as being placed. I was also much pleased with the interest taken in my success by Mr. Christison. I remember him quite well, particularly one time in summer that I was at Cumbernauld by myself, some ages ago (I fancy in 1791), and used to live with him in the second table room. I have a confused recollection of his marrying somebody I knew, but I forget who it is. This is the way with many people, even of those about whom I wish to know. Not hearing of them for years, I forget what I have heard, and even can scarcely tell whether they are dead or alive. What, for instance, has become of Miss Telfer (Jenny, I think, her name was), whom I used to squire from her boarding school to the Castle, while we lived there? I think I asked this once before. I wish, as you say, that Maria was married. I have never seen her (since she was an infant), and, to say the truth, I scarcely wish it, having an invincible prejudice against her complexion, as belonging to our family at least. James seems to be going on wisely and happily, living very moderately, and saving money. I wish he were home to try it, though one would scarcely expect him to like it. He, however, liked St. Helena exceedingly, which is equally unlike what he has been used to. Never think for a moment of my making any figure in England. The time for that, if there ever was a time, is past, and I have no thoughts of doing anything at home, but leading a quiet and pleasant life on a very moderate income. Lady Hood is very kind in her sentiments on this subject, and I am flattered by her good opinion, but I have always mentioned that she was in the wrong, and every year strengthens my argument. If there was anything that I should wish to do more than another after I return, it would be to assist in recovering our family interest in Stirlingshire,

and I am certain that I could with equal ease establish our influence in the kingdom of Morocco. I should be far too shy to get intimate with the neighbours, and I do not think I could muster impudence to ask a carse laird for his vote, if the election of our member depended on it. This is the consequence of having lived partly at solitary stations, and partly among officers of the army, whom I have no occasion to canvass. You must wonder what led to this long discussion about myself, and indeed my whole letter must seem unconnected; but I am going over your letter, and answering every part that suggests any reply. You say Charles is in Portugal. I have heard he was in Italy, and as he likes rambling, I am not without hopes that I may see him before long between that country and this. I have applied for six months' leave of absence to go with a friend of mine, brother of Edward Strachey, as far as Constantinople. My getting leave and being able to go are more than doubtful, but if I do, I shall write forthwith to Charles to come and meet me, which, if he is in Italy, would be no great exertion. The pleasure of meeting him would be worth the journey. But independent of that, I should expect it to be of use to my health, notwithstanding the fatigue, and I should expect much improvement from visiting so many interesting countries, and from reviving the habits of activity, which one is apt to lose by remaining so long in one place. What you say of returning soon home has full weight with me, but I must stay till I am rich enough to live at home; and my plans are humble enough, as they are confined to the acquisition of 1,500*l.* a year. I shall not have this sum in less than five years. Remember me most kindly to my sisters, and believe me, my dear Clemy,

‘Ever yours affectionately,

‘M. ELPHINSTONE.’

‘Poona, November 18, 1816.

‘My dear Lady Hood,—My former letters will long ago have cleared me from the suspicion of laziness. The truth is, I have too much pleasure in receiving your letters not to take every means of acquiring a title to expect them, and if I were

not convinced that what you say of the dulness of Poona correspondence is one of the many true words said in jest, I should probably write you more letters than you would care to read. I was much pleased to hear of your intention of publishing an account of your travels, and was looking out impatiently for the promised sheets, when I heard from my brother that you had given up the design. I am greatly disappointed at the news. You have such opportunities of knowing how your publishing could be regarded by those for whose opinions you care, that I must suppose your decision is right ; but although I do not think that a lady gains by the mere circumstance of being an author, yet a lady as well as anybody else must rise in everyone's esteem by producing a good book ; and if yours had not high claims to excellence, it must have been owing to something in the subject more untractable than I can imagine. It is very true that nothing hitherto written about India has either attracted or deserved much attention, and perhaps there may be some ground for thinking that all the actions and works of the Indians partake of the listlessness of their climate, and are incapable of being represented with force or animation ; but if anybody could remedy this defect it ought to be you. Setting aside all natural advantages, of which I must say nothing, you had just time to see and understand everything without being long enough in India to lose your relish for the novelties of the country ; and in fact you did preserve to the last the greatest ardour about every object of curiosity. This could not but make your narrative lively, and inspire your readers with something of the interest you felt yourself. After all, when I look over your letter and see some of the topics on which you would have touched, I cannot even allow that the subject would have been unfavourable. The mosques, the minarets, tombs, and gardens of so many Mohammedan cities, the marble courts of the Palace of the Moguls, peopled with the recollections of former times, and surrounded with the remains of fallen greatness, could not but affect the imagination, even if in ordinary hands. You may remember, and you could describe, the feeling one experiences when everything around is Hindoo at Vishaisha, in

Benares, for instance, where temples, idols, garlands, bells, conchs, Brahmins, fakeers, every sight and every sound recall the strange and ancient superstitions of the place, and make one forget that there are either English or Mussulmans in India. This could not be indifferent to people who think a single unsophisticated Hindoo village would be so interesting a sight. Then there is nature, which even in India can never want attractions. You mention the Badshah Mehal, and surely there is something wild and romantic in that scene that can scarcely be surpassed in any part of the world. The silent courts and halls in the midst of an almost impenetrable forest, the clear and rapid current of the Jumna, the rich foliage of the woods that cover the hills, and the stupendous mountains that terminate the valley, if they could be justly described, could not but be admired. I do not know whether you participate in my admiration of Himalleh. It is not the mere form and size of the mountains that affect me, but an impression of their calm and solitary grandeur that I cannot well explain. Joined to this is an idea of their antiquity, and almost of their eternal duration. They are the same unaltered peaks that drew the attention of Alexander and his Macedonians, that have looked down on the hosts of Mahmud, Chengiz, and Timur, and that will continue as little changed after we and our empire are forgotten on the earth. You would not always have such scenes to describe, but I think that novelty might recommend to English readers even those parts of India that seem to us least engaging. Besides, you could hurry over all such parts as were likely to be dull, and pause when you come to something fine in the country, or its monuments, or something singular in its inhabitants—when you had to describe a lion hunt, or an interview with a Begum, or the pomp of a Durbar. I need not give all this advice to you who know much better than I do how to make a book amusing. But I am annoyed at the probability of your dropping your plan, and wish to spare no argument to induce you to resume it. However, to show you it is not blind prejudice, and still less flattery, that makes me wish to put your design in a favourable light, I would strongly advise your show-

ing your sheets to some intelligent and *sincere* friend (if such a thing is to be found on such an occasion) who knows the taste of the public, and who will tell you plainly how the book is likely to turn out. Unless such a friend should decide that it would be not only good but of the first order, I would certainly not advise you to publish it, as a lady loses by appearing before the world, unless she does so in a style far above mediocrity. If the sheets you promised had ever reached me, I should have set to work most zealously to ascertain the correctness of the matters of fact, and to detect all tangible errors (about length, breadth, height, depth, and other material subjects), but I could not have ventured to criticise the style, etc. My situation in the midst of the objects described would have rendered me as unfit to judge of the general effect of the description as a person on the stage would be to say how a scene would look from the front boxes. The best proof of this appears in my own book, which, if I could have seen it with the same eyes I now do, should certainly never have appeared in its present form. All my friends who have written to me about it have confined themselves (as might be expected) to compliments, and even the Quarterly reviewers have stuck to generals in their censure; but I myself perceive the perfect justice of your opinion of the third book (about the tribes). It is tedious beyond all endurance, and, if it were worth the pains, I should certainly cast the whole anew, so as to leave out most of that book, and put what deserved retaining into other parts of the work. I should also strike out a myriad of minute particulars of which I was so much enamoured when I was writing them that I should have thought the book ruined if one of them had been left out. While I am mentioning my book I ought to say how very good I thought you in writing so many of the reports you heard on its success. It is the greatest favour that can be conferred on an author at a distance from the scene of publication. I am persuaded that many of the favourable opinions you heard were drawn out by your discovering your own goodwill towards the book, but I am not the less flattered and gratified on that account. Since I began this letter I have received a

compliment that goes far beyond all the partiality of my friends. It is from the Quarterly reviewers, who begin their account of Humboldt in their 28th number with the identical expressions of dispraise which they had applied to me in the 27th. I am not so conceited as to imagine that I ever deserved to be abused in the same terms with Humboldt, but still my vanity is tickled by the coincidence.

‘It is not quite fair to call the language of the “Quarterly” abuse, for, although their review of Caubul is not friendly and not able, the general character of the work at the beginning is quite as favourable as it was entitled to claim. I am fortunately interrupted in this dissertation on myself and my works by one Venetian and two Greek sailors, whom I have picked up to talk over a journey to Constantinople, and return through Egypt, of which I shall say more before I finish this letter. I have had great occasion to lament that I did not profit by the opportunity when you were here to learn Italian, or rather to keep up the study when I had received the impulse. I made it out very ill with the Greeks, but well enough to make me impatient to be among the islands of the Archipelago. Mr. Strachey, who is now Resident at Lucknow, proposed to me last year to make this trip; but we were prevented by different causes. He has now renewed his proposal and I have applied for leave. I hope to leave this by the beginning of March, and to be in Europe by the end of June. We are to go through Asia Minor, and to return through Egypt, but although I have written in such a confident tone, it is very likely we may never go at all, and still more so that we may not get so far. If there is a probability of anything to do in India, of course we shall not stir. Even if there is not, we may not both get leave, and if we do, and find ships ready to convey us where we wish, our time may fail us, and we may be obliged to be content with a trip to Teheran. Notwithstanding all this uncertainty, I cannot help pleasing myself with innumerable “castles in the air” about the journey. It would be very painful to turn back when almost at home; but a journey to England would throw back my ultimate return four or five years, and a trip to Constantinople would not retard

it more than as many months. This letter is running to such an immeasurable length that I must finish it without noticing many parts of your letters on which I wished to make remarks.

‘I ought long ago to have thanked you for the Frenchman’s travels and the Northern letters, but it is scarcely necessary for me to say how much I was obliged for them. I was delighted with the good sense, good taste, and impartiality of the Frenchman. His book has a particular value to us Indians. You only read it to compare with what you already know, but we also read it to learn a great deal that we did not know of the present state of our own country. I read with due attention your account of your own retirement and of the exertions you are making to uphold your house. If the journey to Italy is ever made out I hope it will be extended to Greece. I should be not a little astonished to find you in possession of the Parthenon when I come in post-haste from the Sungum.’

(To Lord Keith.)

‘Poona, November 26, 1816.

‘My dear Uncle,—It is a long time since I have had the pleasure of hearing from you, but I have had the most satisfactory accounts of your health in all my letters from home. I saw a letter, not many days ago, from Sir P. Malcolm to his brother at Bombay, mentioning, among other things, that Tina was well, and pleased with their situation. I wish any chance could have brought them out here. It would not have been a greater sacrifice to them than their present absence from England. I should have heard such full accounts of all my friends.

‘Sir Pulteney gives very interesting notes of his conversations with Bonaparte, which of course you have heard. Nobody seems to have asked him, what is so important to people connected with India, whether he had any real design of sending a force against this country. If he had attempted it, and had been well supported by the Russians, he would very likely have beat us. Even now, if the Russians were to

conquer Persia, as report says is their design, we should be in a great measure at their mercy. Not but what we could defend the admirable frontier which India possesses, if we were secure in the interior; but at present the centre of India would require to be watched as much as the frontier. We have long since (perhaps in Lord Clive's time) abandoned the policy by which we might perhaps have avoided existing jealousy, and we have stopped short in the midst of the only other line that was either safe or consistent, that of establishing our ascendancy over the whole of India. In consequence, we have all the odium without the energy of a conquering people, and all the responsibility of an extensive empire, without its resources, or its military advantages. There would be some reason for remaining in this dangerous position if we were increasing our strength, in the meantime, by the advantages of peace; but so far are we from that, that our provinces and the dominions of our allies are much more exposed to invasion and plunder than they would be in time of war, and the money expended in any one year on our present defensive system (which is quite inefficient) would probably have been sufficient to crush all our enemies, and to give us a solid and compact empire to defend.

‘You are of course acquainted with the incursion made by the Pindarrees into the provinces of the Madras Presidency last year. This year we have the advantage of a treaty with the Raja of Berar, which, if anything could have done so, would have given an appearance of practicability to our defensive system. We have a strong force on the northern frontier of our allies, including all our own cavalry that could possibly be spared, and a large portion of that of our allies. We have also taken advantage of the range of mountains that runs across the Deckan, and have posted troops to prevent the Pindarrees penetrating through the passes of those hills. Yet our preparations were scarcely in forwardness, when the Pindarrees began their usual career. One division of three or four thousand entered at a point that there had not been time to occupy, passed near the cantonment of Jaulna, carried off some

camels, close to a battalion encamped about twenty miles west of the fort of Ahmednuggur, attacked some of the cattle of the Poona subsidiary force at Seroor, passed within fifteen miles of this city, beating off a small detachment of the Peshwa, and proceeded to the southward, on their way no doubt to the western part of the Madras provinces. In the meantime the eastern part of the frontier, which is particularly strong, had been completely occupied by the Nagpoor subsidiary force, and the Pindarrees were driven back on their first attempts to penetrate it; but at length a body of 5,000 eluded all attempts to obstruct them, and pushed straight for Raja Mundary in the northern Sircars, where they are probably putting to flight the judges and collectors by this time. The Madras Government was about to establish a chain of posts along their frontier to keep out the Pindarrees; but what can posts of infantry, forty or fifty miles apart, do to stop horse that march thirty or forty miles a day for a week together when they are pushed? It is plain they can pass between our posts without ever being heard of, and even if they were to pass within twenty yards, they would only have to receive one volley before they were out of the reach of attack or pursuit. It is quite obvious that the only way to get the better of these freebooters is to attack them in their permanent stations, to keep up a continued hunt after them with relays of troops, and to allow them no rest in any part of India until they are effectually dispersed or cut to pieces. The obstacle to our doing this is, that their asylum is in the country of Sindia; but the Resident with Sindia is of opinion that if the demand were seriously made, Sindia would at once agree to all the measures requisite to enable us to crush the Pindarrees; and everyone knows that, if he did not agree, we could reduce him to any terms we pleased in one short campaign. Lord Moira appears to be very sensible of all this, and well aware of the only remedy that is within our reach; but positive orders from the Court of Directors are understood to tie his hands. I sincerely hope, if this be true, that the orders will soon be rescinded. It is bad enough that our enemies are enriching themselves by the plunder of our pro-

vinces, while we are wasting our resources on ineffectual preparations ; but it is still more serious that our troops are getting dispirited, and our subjects alarmed, while our enemies are daily gaining confidence in the belief that they have at last discovered the means of overcoming us, by recurring to their ancient habits of predatory war, and that they are about to act over again, at our expense, the scenes that first led to the establishment of Mahratta greatness. I have been led farther into this subject than I had any thoughts of when I began on it, and perhaps than is quite suitable to the occasion.

‘ Believe me, &c. &c.

‘ M. ELPHINSTONE.’

(To Lady Keith.)

‘ Poona, November 27, 1816.

‘ My dear Aunt,—I was very sensible of the kindness of your letter of March last, and I should have earlier afforded my acknowledgments for the pleasure I received from it ; but if you found a difficulty in discovering subjects to write on, in the midst of everything that is animating in itself and interesting to your correspondent, you may easily imagine how little hope I can have of amusing you by a letter from a country for which you can feel so little concern, and which has so few attractions even for those most connected with it. It seems that where everything is so different from what it is in England, I ought to find abundance of matter that might amuse by its novelty. I am writing in a garden of trees, some of which have no names in English, and others are among the rarest in your greenhouses. My room is filled with the smoke of incense burned before a Hindoo god not ten yards from my house, where troops of women come, with music playing before them, to hang up garlands, to sacrifice sheep, and to cut off their own hair, which they have vowed to the divinity. In the same garden there is a very ancient ruined tomb of a Mohammedan female saint, which is a place of such

sanctity that an oath taken in it is reckoned sacred, even among the faithless people. I have just heard loud lamentations over a dead body, and I now see a funeral pyre kindling on the banks of a river close at hand, where I have before seen the living consumed with the dead. The mourners are sitting in silence on the ground looking on till it be time to gather up the ashes of their friend. Two large elephants are wallowing in the water at no great distance, and on the road that crosses the river are buffaloes, camels, horsemen with long spears and loose drapery, and foot passengers, male and female, in dresses of all sorts and colours.

‘At this moment a procession is passing of Mohammedans dressed like Arabs, performing a frantic dance, and flourishing their drawn swords in honour of the sons of Aly, of whose martyrdom this is the anniversary. The whole town is ringing with drumming, trumpeting and shouting, occasioned by the same festival, and to make the whole still more unlike England, the country round is laid waste by a body of predatory horse, who have made an inroad from beyond the Nerbudda, and have driven the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages in on the capital. But all these peculiarities of India have already been described, and, at all events, they have lost all their novelty to me, and I cannot describe to others things that have ceased to make a lively impression on myself. If Lady Hood were to publish the journal of her travels, it would probably give a better idea of India than anything that has yet appeared, as she was long enough in the country to see and understand everything, and not long enough to lose her relish for Indian sights. I was very sorry to see your letter confirm all the bad accounts that have been current of Lord Byron’s treatment of his wife. To us that know him only by his works, it seemed almost impossible that his “Farewell” should have been written without deep feelings of tenderness and affection in the author. If anything could remove this favourable impression it would be the coarse scurrility of the satire published at the same time with the other poem. I ought to have before said how much I was obliged for the pen you sent me: besides

its beauty, it is particularly convenient for travelling in the country where materials for writing are not to be procured.

‘Believe me, &c.

‘M. ELPHINSTONE.’

(*Edward Strachey, Esq.*)

‘Poona, November 29, 1816.

‘You need not admonish me to come home. It is already the subject of my thoughts and dreams, and I have more than once been on the point of going for a time ; but the thoughts of being three or four years an *omeedwar*⁴ and of staying out here till fifty deterred me. I am, however, persuaded that by continuing here for the five years that are necessary to give me 1,500*l.* a year, I give up a great part of my chance even of happiness in this world. As to action or distinction, that is gone long ago. I shall be forty-two by the time I get home—too old to set up a wife and family, and likewise too old to mix in society so as to be able to do without them. I doubt also whether I shall be able to get on without some employment. I might, if I could, go heartily into society, and this I should like well enough to do,

ἀλλὰ μάλ' αἰνῶς

Αἰδέομαι Τρῶας καὶ Τρωάδας ἐλκεσιπέπλους,⁵

an unfortunate epithet in this age of short petticoats, and I doubt whether I shall ever be at my ease among them. Are you ever shy nowadays? One's life in this country (for the genus Humdrum) is not so bad ; but the great charm of it is the hope of getting home, and when one is home what delusions are we to depend on next?

“Peace waits us on the shores of Acheron.”

And that, though not in Lord Byron's sense, is really no small consolation. By-the-bye, you have never mentioned what are your thoughts of Lord Byron, though all the rest of the world

⁴ Expectant (of office).

⁵ But I very much fear the Trojans and the long-robed Trojan women.

seems to have been talking of him for these last three or four years. I like "Childe Harold" very much. It is exquisite blue-devilage. If you have read it but once, I dare say you do not like it. I was so disappointed in the expectation I had formed from its title, and so disgusted with the badness of the old English, and the affectation of using old English at all, that I did not admire it at first; but on reading it again I did extremely. One merit it has. It is the first practical exhibition of real blue devils—causeless, cureless dejection, with gloom enough to be interesting, and not so dark as to be really distressing—a Claude Lorraine picture of the world, that sometimes shows things under a tint more pleasing than their natural colours. Then, Lord Byron's poetry ("Childe Harold" at least) is always written in good faith. Topics are not brought forward because they are capable of embellishment, nor sentiments introduced because they appear to be required. The poet seems to pour forth whatever strikes his own mind because it strikes him, and to employ the language that will express his thought with most force, and without much considering how either the ideas or the diction are to affect his readers. I do not like his tales half so well. I am sick of their monotony or mannerism; and, besides, his heroes, with all their dark energies, are too much akin to the captains of robbers and proprietors of castles in the Apennines, that have figured so much in plays and romances, German and English, for the last fifty years. The finest lines in Lord Byron, I think, are the seventh, eighth, and ninth stanzas of the second canto of "Childe Harold," which read, I beg of you. You may even read from the beginning of the canto if you have time.

'You used to say, speaking of Forlorn, that it was the sign of an ignorant man to talk much of the book he happened to be reading, and you must have discovered before now that I am reading "Childe Harold," and have had the blue devils. I have so, though it is of rare occurrence with me now. I am sure it is not from want of plenty to say, nor yet from any exuberance of time to say it in, that I fill my letter with critiques on noble authors. My letter of February will have

told you the Poona news you allude to. Trimbukjee has since broke prison, but has kicked up no row yet, though he has been loose since September. He has kept concealed, and has effectually puzzled me with innumerable contradictory reports of the place of his retreat. If he attempts to make any disturbance, we shall have him immediately; and if he does not, it does not much signify whether we catch him or not. India is quiet, except for the Pindarrees. We have great armies in the field; and Sindia and Holkar quake and pray God to avert all cause of dispute; but the Pindarrees, whom they cannot control, ravage our Madras provinces and those of our allies, among whom, by the way, we now reckon the Raja of Berar.

‘They are down at present, and more plundering within fifteen miles of this two or three days ago. We have been trying to stop the Adjuttee range from the Western Ghauts to the Wurda, but all defensive plans are absurd with such an enemy. I understand it is the positive orders of the Court of Directors that prevent more vigorous measures. Bacon-fed knaves! Buller has arrived at Calcutta, and Adam writes in raptures of the good sense and cheerfulness of his accounts of home. Dick has started his plan of going to Constantinople again. I entered on it at once though rather coldly, but I have since thought over it till I am in a flame for Greece—

“And thou, Parnassus, whom I now survey,
Not in the frenzy of a dreamer’s eye,
Not in the fabled landscape of a lay,” &c. &c.

Imagine exploring Thermopylæ for the tomb of the three hundred Spartans, or actually finding their epitaphs—

“Stranger, tell the Lacedæmonians
That here we lie in obedience to their commands.”⁶

‘My plan is to pass through Asia Minor, stay three months in Greece, and come back by Egypt. It might take you eight months, but I should only ask for six months’ leave.

⁶ Herodotus, xi. 228.

If there is anything to do in India, of course I shall not go. I might go home too if I thought I could get any appointment there; but Malcolm looks to Bombay, and Adam to Council. I mention Bombay, because you alluded to it. I never even thought of it, not because I think I could not get on where Jonathan has governed and Charles Rickets been talked of, but because I have no claims, and no particular interest. I should like nothing in it but the pay. A Governor of Bombay must always be hated. His great duty is to economise and buy cotton. I should not even like the patronage. I am pretty clear of being plagued with recommendations, and of being obliged to promote the undeserving, to pass over the good, and to displease the presumptuous, and have no wish "to mingle in the filthy fray." So much for the Government.

What my sister said about Parliament probably alluded to two counties where our family used to have great weight (in one, to lay down the law), and now we have no influence in either. It is, therefore, the first duty of any one of us to endeavour to recover our affairs; but as to my doing it, that is quite another business. Few men from India could canvass, and I least of all in my best days, and you are not to estimate my sluggishness now by what you recollect in 1807; besides the radical obstacle above mentioned, *Αἰδέομαι*, &c. Remember me kindly to Mrs. Strachey.

‘Believe me, &c.,

‘M. ELPHINSTONE.’

CHAPTER XI.

KIRKEE, 1816-1817.

PREPARATIONS FOR A PINDARREE WAR—GLOOMY THOUGHTS—SUBMISSION OF PESHWA, AND NEW TREATY—SUPERCESSION—MALCOLM'S VISIT—HIS MISTAKE—WARLIKE PREPARATIONS IN POONA—WITHDRAWAL OF CONTINGENT TO KIRKEE—ADVANCE OF PESHWA'S FORCE, AND BATTLE OF KIRKEE—A LUCKY MISTAKE.

MR. ELPHINSTONE'S journals increase in interest as we approach the crisis of Mahratta affairs. The versatility with which he could turn from public matters of absorbing interest to literature, or follow the labours of his friends is nowhere more apparent than at this period. As the plot thickened, however, there was no time for correspondence, except what referred to public matters, and the volume of letters on which I have drawn in the last chapter closes abruptly, and I have for a time to rely on the journals alone.

On turning to the entries during the year 1816, we find his thoughts occasionally turning to some literary enterprise, or more frequently engaged in plans of travel. Early in the the year he wrote :—

‘It struck me this morning, in talking after breakfast about the revolutions in Poona, that an interesting history might be produced of the Mahratta Empire, and that the time when such a work might be produced is rapidly passing away. It would comprise the dissolution of the Mogul Empire, with the causes and formation of the present order of things. It would have great interest and some variety, with more perfect unity than could be found in a history of a longer period. The grand objection lies in the want of interest in the actors, arising from the total absence of virtue and elevation of character

among them. The struggles of Sivajee and his successors, the splendid conquests and tremendous reverses of the first Peshwas, the re-establishment of their power by their adoption of the European art of war, the crimes and distractions of the succeeding period, and the final close of the Mahratta turbulence and Mahratta greatness in the Treaty of Bassein, would afford no bad material for a judicious historian; and the work might be embellished by descriptions of various countries and manners, and by portraits of several remarkable characters. Information also might be more easily obtained than on most topics, equally unknown to the public, and my circumstances and duties would afford me better opportunities than are generally enjoyed of acquiring a thorough knowledge of my subject. But the unimportance of the subject to European readers must be made up by connecting it with the general history of the species; and this requires a thorough knowledge of the principles of human actions. The style also must be condensed and animated, and the reflections striking and profound. In these requisites I find myself deficient, but it may be worth while to consider this subject well before I dismiss it from my mind.'

On September 12 he reverts to the subject:—

'*Sept. 12.*—It has always been a great source of uneasiness to me that I should be at a loss for something to do after I go to England. To remedy this I have thought of writing a Mahratta history, or a history of the fall of the Mogul Empire and the rise of ours. I now think of a translation of Arrian with a commentary, chiefly geographical. The mere thought of such an undertaking should make me learn Greek, in which I am deplorably deficient, and I might collect the materials for my commentary in India, and examine the route on my way home. I began Arrian this morning, instead of Ariosto, which was for a short time my morning book.'

'*Sept. 14.*—Herodotus and Arrian are interrupted for a time. Trimbukjee has broke loose, and the result is uncertain. I have announced to the Peshwa that he must not harbour him if he wishes for peace with us, and I have recalled the

subsidiary force to Seroor to prevent his making any disturbance of himself.'

'*Sept. 24.*—The heavy rains have for the first time prevented my riding to-day. I read twenty-one pages of Arrian instead, and brought Alexander to Tyre. Herodotus also gets on admirably. Trimbukjee of course requires attention, but my arrangements are made, and I have plenty of time.'

'*Sept. 28.*—All quiet, though Trimbukjee is thought to be in Poona.'

'*Nov. 28.*—I have been thinking, though not so very much of late, of my trip to Constantinople, which I have a plan of extending to England. This gives rise to many day-dreams. I read about Greek Syntax, and translate, as before mentioned.'

'*Dec. 21.*—I have received the third volume of Clarke, Tournefort, and a set of Pinkerton from Mr. Erskine. I have examined the routes and distances in the Mediterranean with great interest, and looked at the pictures of the antiquities with inexpressible pleasure. I shall be disappointed beyond measure if I do not make out my journey. Jefferys and I rode yesterday to Phoolgaon. I saw the Peshwa, who has been overturned in his coach. We sat some time with him in his new town and new garden.'

'*Dec. 22.*—I read some of Clarke's third volume. My own prospect of seeing Greece gives the greatest interest to travels in that country. Read with a thrill of delight Dr. Clarke's admirable description of his feelings on approaching Athens. I cannot describe my ardour to visit the same illustrious spot. Seas, deserts, dangers, and fatigues will not be encountered in vain for that one moment. Yet I feel my want of acquaintance with Greek, and with Greece. I must seize this period of interest to get familiar with them.'

A week later he had to record the disappointment of his highly-wrought expectations.

'*Jan. 6.*—My Grecian plan is at an end. Immediate preparations, and a prospect of exertions in India, render it impossible for any one to be absent. It is a sad blow; but I must turn my misfortune to account, and employ the time in

learning Greek, and in preparing myself to visit Greece, which I expected to have spent in the actual enjoyment. I am disheartened, and unable to do that. The hunt was out the day before yesterday; hard work and no sport.'

'*Jan. 16.*—Notwithstanding the disappointment of the plans I had so much cherished, the last fortnight has passed delightfully; but I am afraid I have an arrear of melancholy to discharge, and that the hour of payment is now fast approaching.'

'*Jan. 24.*—I must make up for past idleness by applying with vigour to the Pindarrees, etc. I must also set to earnestly with Greek, which may now be learned, and *may* be dropped for ever. I must positively resist melancholy, which is gaining on me these two months. I must hope for the tranquil and delightful mornings among my books, which I enjoyed this time last year. It is now hot, and I am unwell and industrious in consequence, as is the way with me.'

'On the 28th I had a party to dine here, which was stupid enough, as my parties generally are. After dinner, about a quarter before eleven, I mounted with Jeffreys, White and Pottinger, and set off to Tanklee, thirty miles. We picked up Malet, and rode all night till about three, when the moon set; and not unpleasantly, on the whole, arrived at five, day just opening. Slept three hours—breakfasted—started at eleven, hunted the Parouree jungle till four; hard work, little sport, nothing killed.

'31st.—Up at 6.30, out at eight; moved to Raybaugh and Ashtapoor, and along the river to Nandoor; snatched a tiffin in a quarter of an hour, and off to the temple and Capoordee jungles. Found nothing; at three left the hunt at the end of the Capoordee hills, and rode home with Mr. White—in all forty-eight or fifty miles. I have not been tired out at all in all this trip. While hunting, among many absurdities, I made some rational reflections, chiefly on the bad consequences of the spirit of discontent, in which I am again indulging, and which must in time affect my temper, and be as unpleasant to others as to myself. This is in a great measure owing to the

visionary life I lead, spending nearly as much time in an ideal world of my own creation as in actual life. This makes me averse to conversation, and even to business; as I can be better entertained where I have everything my own way than in the disappointments and flatness of real intercourse with the world. My own world—which ought not to exist if it does not yield great delight—is often overhung with gloom, peopled with dismal phantoms. Even the most pleasing pictures of my imagination lead to melancholy, by holding out prospects of fame, felicity, and perfection—perhaps never found together by anyone, and certainly unattainable to me; and this at once takes away all interest from the pleasures within my reach, and saddens me with the idea of my own mediocrity. How much more rational would it be to confine myself to views consistent with my actual situation, and to call in the aid of my imagination (when it is called in at all) to exhilarate and embellish, instead of darken and deform, the scene in which my life is to be spent. It may be said that these longings after something beyond our reach lead to great designs and great exertions. Why have they not done so hitherto? It is certain that they are against happiness, and even against energy, and fictive in my present sphere. These habits of giving way to the imagination are not to be broken at once, after so many years of indulgence; but they may be made useful. Why not fire my imagination with the pleasure and profit of rational studies—Greek and philosophy? or with some attainable design, such as the final settlement of India? I must do this; but in drawing off from some of my fancies I must not take offence at people, as if they had drawn off from me, which certainly has not happened.

‘*Feb.* 1.—I observe Bolingbroke and Arbuthnot ridicule Swift’s spleen and discontent—most justly. Yet Swift had no small excuse for repining, if anything could excuse it. In me it would be ridiculous. I repine at my obscurity. I ought to endeavour to remove it. I might as well repine at my not having been born a giant or a king. My other grounds of dissatisfaction are, that I am denied some advantages by nature—gaiety, spirits, talents; and I have thrown away others

myself—youth, health, money, &c.; so that I have a prospect of an obscure and cheerless old age.’

He combats these sad thoughts by the consideration that much is still within his reach, and other objects of desire may be dispensed with; and that it is childish to anticipate evils, which mainly arise from a want of manliness and philosophy, and ought to be overcome; and that he ought to think less of himself: ‘study τὸ πρέπον and pray for virtue and content.’

Two days later he returns to the same subject, and discusses the causes of his depression under different heads and in much more detail. The picture which he draws of the future is in the gloomiest colours; but he struggles manfully against these fanciful notions, and resolves not to anticipate evil.

The want of sympathy with much of the society into which he is thrown is, in his view, something to struggle against; and he resolves to exert himself to be sociable. He sums up thus:—

‘The grand secret of my present system is vigorously to resist vain desires, and vigorously to compass those within my reach. I must not easily reckon objects unattainable. I must remember that dulness and want of interest are a thousand times worse than even discontent and dejection; and I must keep up an anxious wish for honour and for improvement. Even my contentment must not be carried so far as to prevent my wishing for change, or even thinking death a good thing. Active employment, bodily or mental, here or in a camp; enlarging my knowledge, keeping awake my imagination; enterprising journeys: the sight of a war, if possible; bustle at Calcutta; applause for zeal and energy—these must be the grand objects of my desires, and must not be longed for, but prized or worked for. Ἐλπίδι μὲν τὸ ἀφανὲς τοῦ κατορθώσκειν ἐπιτρέψας, ἔργῳ δὲ περὶ τοῦ ἤδη ὁρωμένου μοι αὐτῷ ἀξίων πεποιθέναι,¹ my Grecian plan, the society I have been in,

¹ ‘Whilst I have trusted to the hope of bringing to a happy termination that which is not apparent, I think myself justified in having confidence that I can carry out that which has already been placed before my eyes.’—Thucyd. ii 42, altered from 3rd person plural to 1st singular.

the books I have been reading, and the hope of a Pindarree war, have of late animated and agitated me a good deal. I must endeavour to keep up the impulse, and preserve both my understanding and my imagination from torpor.'

I have given specimens of these singular communings on account of the interest in what follows. India was on the eve of great events, in which Mr. Elphinstone played a considerable part. At the call of duty all these wretched forebodings and self-reproaches were cast aside, and he stood forth as the soldier-statesman who upheld his country's interest with wisdom and honour during a trying period of Indian history. All his anxieties are entered in his journal during the six months which ended with the battle of Kirkee; and this portion of the journal must be given very fully.

'On the 8th I began Greek exercises again, and did business all day. Jefferys did not come in the evening. To-day I have been visiting in camp; finishing "Columbus," with a little of the "Man of Feeling."'

'Feb. 14.—The hunt was out yesterday at Waronda. I rode there on the previous night and arrived at half-past one. On the way we repeated, with great delight, the "Country Churchyard," the "Allegro" and "Penseroso," and some other poetry. Hot weather and little sport—one hog killed. I find my way of dreaming still strong. It is the greatest of all waste of time, and, unlike other idling, it mixes with and impedes business and reflection, when in their actual exercise; and as nothing was ever well done, or conceived without undivided attention, the consequence is apparent. It is also a bore; for, after rendering all common life insipid, it gets insipid itself. One is likewise apt to confound the ideal world with the real one, and to act, or at least to talk, on totally false grounds. I would by no means reject those day-dreams, which elevate the mind, awaken the feelings, or exercise the imagination; but all musings which have not those effects, and still more all which nourish bad passions, ought to be stoutly resisted. It is hot to-day, though I still hope for a cold fortnight.'

'There has been a small body of Pindarrees in the Concan

which we tried, with little success hitherto, to intercept. There is a body of troops, first foot and now horse—forming under Trimbukjee, near the Pagoda of Mahadeo. . . . Remonstrating with the Peshwa and making preparations for more effectual measures. This last business is the leading event of the time; it has in a great measure repelled former thoughts. I read Thucydides, and do Greek exercises with Jefferys, with some profit, but small. I read Ellis's specimens, and letters of Swift.'

'*Night*.—I have had much information about Trimbukjee this evening, and, like all the intelligence I have received of late, it is full of notices of plans to assassinate me. This is probably the result of a design to try to intimidate me into listening to proposals for Trimbukjee's pardon, after temptations and prayers have failed. I have always expected this part of the game to come in its season, and must take care not to be annoyed at it, now it has come. No one could ward off such designs, if really entertained; and caring about them would probably harass one in the end. I must entirely disregard them, and not allow them to attract my attention. I should be ashamed if they even gave me an uneasy hour.'

'*March 3*.—I have now plenty of business with Trimbukjee and the Peshwa, and remonstrances and military arrangements, no time for blue devils; scarce enough for agreeable reflections. I combine a good deal of varied interest with a proper proportion of *οὐ φροντίς*,² and am happy enough. I wrote a long

² This phrase (or as fully quoted, *οὐ φροντίς ἱπποκλείδῃ*), recurs again and again in his journal at this time, and is explained in the following extract from a letter to Strachey of a somewhat later date—

'Poona, June 27, 1817.

'I have had a very busy, active, interesting time lately, but it is all over, and I have my choice to sink into ennui and blue devils, or to enter into the joy of study and tranquillity. I am too old and too wise to hesitate between them, though somewhat vexed by repinings at the want of any opportunity for exertion, when so fine a field is opening in India. I allude to the Pindarree war, which must end in a general war. Malcolm and Sir T. Hislop are to have the Deckan part of it, and the Residences of course are, for the time being, overshadowed and shorn of their beams; *οὐ φροντίς ἱπποκλείδῃ*, a proverb I

letter to Adam about the Peshwa two days ago. I last night read Collins with delight.'

'*March 7.*—Hard fagging at Trimbukjee and the Peshwa. I do not see how all this is to end. Last night the moon was nearly full, and it was cloudy. The combination gave a peculiar, romantic, and even awful light. I walked about and enjoyed it. It was a night to see a good spirit. I have something of the hot-weather-feel this evening.'

'*March 19.*—Richard Strachey arrived on the 14th, and I have passed the time since in talking over old times, Calcutta, Caubul, Delhi, &c. He is thin, but still as young as ever, and almost as lively as ever. It makes me ten years younger to talk with him; and after comparing notes, I feel a dread of being shy and retired when I get to England. Would the time were come!'

'*Evening.*—Strachey is just off to the adventure of a journey overland, and the pleasures of England. I am left to Poona politics and Poona pleasures. In five years, however, I hope to join him at home, and in the meantime I must try to say *οὐ φροντὶς Ἰπποκλείδῃ.*

'*March 24.*—I have been hard at the Peshwa and Trimbukjee. The former is recruiting and putting forts in order;

learned lately in Herodotus, and which, at thirty-seven, appears to be the essence of all philosophy and of all human wisdom. It answers to "It is all one a hundred years hence," or to the "Devil may care" of the North, and has stood me in stead in many trials, where all other philosophy would have failed. . . .'

The story, as told by Herodotus, runs as follows:—Clisthenes, tyrant of Sicyon, having invited the suitors of his daughter to appear on a day appointed, Hippoclides, the son of Tysander, appeared among the rest, and was received with marked favour by their host, on account of his personal reputation and that of his family. After the supper the suitors engaged in a discussion on music and other things, whereupon Hippoclides directed the musicians to play a certain tune, and began to dance with great agility, and then, ordering a table to be brought, he danced first according to the Lacedæmonian, and then in the Athenian manner. At length he stood upon his head, gesticulating with his feet. Whereupon Clisthenes, who had viewed his early proceedings with much disgust, lost all patience, and exclaimed, 'Son of Tysander, you have danced away your wife;' *οὐ φροντὶς Ἰπποκλείδῃ* (what cares Hippoclides?) was the reply, and the words became a proverb.—Herodotus, *Erat.* 129.

the latter is breaking out. Things draw to a crisis. I have sent in plans for the future, political and military. Colonel Smith³ has been here three days, and went off this evening. He is a fine fellow, and shows excellent good sense in consultations like this. It is a thousand pities he indulges his habits of censoriousness and irritability. The weather is hot now, but my health is not bad, and my spirits are excellent. I do not know whether to attribute it to my being busy and interested, or to the new philosophy I have taken up; but I have not for a long time felt so cheerful and easy in society as of late. I wish it were the latter cause, which is permanent, and arises from myself.'

'*March 28.*—The 17th marched in. I have been reading the "Edinburgh Review," with a capital critique on Swift, and some instructive discussion about his character. Things looked very like war yesterday, but to-day have come round. I am now employed on these troubles, and *totus in illis*.'

'*March 31.*—The Peshwa submitted yesterday, and agreed to dismiss his troops, dismantle his garrisons, and wait the Governor-General's decision, which I have told him would be more or less severe, in proportion to the sincerity with which he acts against the rebels. I do not much think his Highness is at all sincere. Even if he is, we may have a row still. I have put tatties up to-day. The days are rather hot, and I am feverish; but the moonlight nights are cool and delightful, and on the whole there is no reason to complain yet.

'*April 6.*—The Peshwa's feigned submission was followed by such renewed activity in his preparations that I did not think an attempt to surprise us unlikely on the night of the 31st. On the 1st I put the brigade and the Residency in a state of defence, as in Trimbukjee's time, and told the Peshwa that if he went on increasing his force he should be attacked; but if he stopped we would wait the Governor-General's decision. I would give no promise about the nature of the decision, and would not require him to disarm if he wished to be prepared for

³ Afterwards Sir Lionel Smith.

war. I visited the Bhow on the 4th, and repeated this language. There is no agitation in this affair, as there was in Trimbukjee's. I think a quarrel with the Peshwa desirable, and therefore look on everything with perfect security, except the prospect of undecided conduct on the part of Lord Moira. Even on the 31st I did not feel the slightest anxiety.

'I am now too busy for Greek, but I read a little of Humboldt. This bustle and the hot weather have driven many former thoughts out of my head. The journey to Greece, among others, and Greece itself, are quite forgotten.'

'April 13.—Very hot weather for some days. My line being taken, I have not much to do, and less to think of. I have been reading "Edinburgh" and other reviews. I have, however, sufficient occupation to prevent low spirits or even reflection. This evening alone I have been a little thoughtful. I am pleased to see how well I have fulfilled my plan of being cheerful and sociable, and of avoiding dreams and fancies. I must not slide into my old habits, and must never forget my maxim, *οὐ φροντὶς Ἰπποκλείδῃ*.'

'April 25.—Things go on rapidly. A body of 4,000 horse set off from the . . .⁴ on the 11th, and were pursued by Colonel Smith to the Neera. They were picked up on the Beema by Major Smith and six companies, and pursued to near the Godavery river, where they were beaten without loss. They were then pursued by Colonel Milne to the Ghauts, taken up there by the Vinchoorkar, and finally dispersed with great loss at Jamderry. Another body of 2,000 was attacked and routed in Candeish by Davies with 800 Nizam's horse. He is wounded, poor fellow. The Peshwa, till this business of the Vinchoorkar, seemed to go on as ill as possible. I had ordered in the Light Division, which will be here to-morrow. I shall then be quite prepared for my orders, which must soon be here. It is a fine stirring period.

'April 27.—The Light Division came in yesterday. I have given up all thoughts of attempting to seize the Peshwa in the

⁴ Illegible.

city, on account of the calamities such an enterprise would bring on the inhabitants. Major Lushington and many other officers here to-day. It is very pleasant—the new faces and bustle.’

‘*April 30.*—Walking in the moonlight last night, and thinking how pleasant these times are, although they come after I have often given up all hopes of pleasure in life, I came to the conclusion that if there should be an active campaign now, and I have the good fortune to witness it, as is likely, this will be as pleasant as any time in my whole life. Less novelty than the Mahratta war, less sanguine hope than the journey to Caubul, but a pleasant prospect of exertion and a reasonable hope of success. The political part will be interesting and important, and the military, as it is not my business, will be my amusement.’

‘*May 7.*—Things have gone as pleasantly as before, plenty of interest, plenty of society, the heat moderate for the season. The dawk from Calcutta has been intercepted, which has cut off my instructions; I am therefore acting without them. I have given the Peshwa twenty-four hours to give up four forts as securities for his seizing Trimbukjee. If he refuses, we surround the town, and war begins. I had a long interview with the Peshwa yesterday night, perhaps the last. He was collected, conciliatory, and able, but would not pledge himself to give up Trimbukjee. I thought it possible, in these extremities, and with his treachery, he might seize me for a hostage, and carry me off to Singhur, but he seemed not to have the most distant thought that way. To-day everything is as calm as if the force were at Jaulna and the Peshwa at Copergaum. With all his crimes and with all his perfidy I shall be sorry if Bajee Rao throws away his sovereignty.’

‘*May 9.*—The Peshwa sent several messages in the night to make me lengthen the period to four or five days, and afterwards to make me take two forts, leaving out Rygurgh. At seven in the morning, when the troops were almost at the town, he promised acquiescence. The troops marched on and surrounded the town in very fine style, and at ten came orders for two forts. The order for the most important, Rygurgh, came

at three, and the carcoon, who brought it, missed the detachment, and had a lame pony, which lost more time. Singhur has been delivered up empty, so that the delay was to remove the treasures. The Peshwa was nearly off in the night, and I had nearly moved the cavalry to stop him. I spent the day in camp, and came home in the evening. We must now have a new era, or a repetition of the same course, ending in the Peshwa's ruin. I have taken to writing politics in my journal of late, which must not be often done.'

'*May 15.*—The Light Division went back to its old ground this morning. I am drawing up a new treaty. I have advised sending Malcolm here, and me to Lucknow. I do it merely for the chance of conciliating the Peshwa. I know no place will ever suit me so well as this, for health or pleasure; yet I am reconciled to Lucknow from my love of change, from the idea that the great difference of life will be useful to me, by breaking old habits, and from the pleasure of seeing Hindustan again, and above all my old friends in Calcutta. I may be sent to some other place, which I may hate; but as my suggestion was founded on the public good, and not on my own convenience, I must make it a point of honour not to repine, either openly, or at heart.'

'*May 30.*—Since the above we have gone on improving. The Peshwa took Moro Dixit for Minister on the twentieth, and instantly adopted strong measures against Trimbukjee. He has been greatly alarmed ever since then; but was coming round. I broke my terms to Dixit on the twenty-eighth, yesterday to the Peshwa. Dixit is to be here to-day to discuss them. I am afraid I must give up the Concan^s to avoid disgusting the whole nation. I have been thinking of officers for the new troops, most of whom I have selected to my satisfaction, if the nomination be left to me. Large parties as usual, but not quite as pleasant as before. The weather has been unusually hot and damp, relieved with showers and coolness. At present it is detestable. I have been reading Boyce's Bonaparte and am now returning to Humboldt.

^s Some of the proposed cessions of territory were in the Northern Concan.

‘June 8.—The rains have slidden in unperceived. It is now cool and pleasant. The treaty takes up every minute from breakfast till dinner ; and playing loo, I am sorry to say, takes up from that till twelve. I have got over (indeed, I did it in one forenoon) some regret I felt at the insignificance to which the Residencies are to be reduced during the approaching campaign ; but the plan is excellent, and Malcolm just the man to carry it into effect. I have now almost forgotten my thoughts of going to Lucknow, and this bustle has driven out of my head my Grecian journey and all my other projects. “Such is the course of the world, and likewise still to forget.”’

‘June 13.—I have been much shocked and alarmed by a letter from Tod announcing a paralytic attack which poor Close has had. To-day I am somewhat relieved by a long letter from Close himself. I am still anxious and uneasy. The treaty will I hope be signed to-day.’

‘June 16.—The treaty was signed on the 13th. On the 14th received instructions notifying the appointment of Sir T. Hislop to the general control of the Deckan, both in the Pindarree war, and in the operations to which our disputes with the Peshwa may lead. The supersession involved in this last arrangement provoked and annoyed me at first ; and I wrote a letter expressing a little of those feelings to Adam ; but by the 15th I had completely recovered my good humour, which it is a point of duty and honour to preserve in all cases. I must never hint at my dissatisfaction, but keep silence to my friends, and say nothing even to myself but *ὁὐ φροντὶς*, &c. To-day I have been seeing the Rifles out. Breakfast with Colonel Smith ; visited Colonel Fitzmaurice in camp. I have now read some of the “Black Dwarf.” I read “Christabel” between the review and breakfast.’

‘June 27.—I have been reading the “Tales of my Landlord,” Lord Byron’s last poems, and the “Poetic Mind,” and attempting “Glenarvon.” The Peshwa is at Punderpoor. The bustle of the treaty over, and I begin to feel want of interest in my present employment, and regret that I have no further prospect of activity or distinction ; but distinction my situa-

tion and very likely my capacity puts beyond my reach, and I must not pine for what is unattainable, nor foster ambition which will probably never be gratified. I think I may venture to calculate on my always retaining a sufficient fund of ambition at bottom to animate me, when any opening offers for its gratification, and I need not sacrifice the pleasures of tranquillity and content for the sake of keeping up a greater stock of energy than my situation requires. I must do my duty, cultivate my taste, indulge my imagination, try to improve my relish for society, and put off all disappointment with my favourite quotation, *οὐ φροντίζω*. Yet I *do* wish for change, bustle, interest, distinction. I have been for these two days at the new corps, horse and foot. Close, thank God, is much better.'

'June 29.—We had divine service to-day, the first time at Poona. We have gone into the new bungalow, and had a very close, dull night to begin with.'

'June 30.—The following passage in the "Edinburgh Review" of Lord Byron is so sensible and so apposite to some of the discussions in my journal in January last that I insert it; although I do not at present stand in need of such admonitions:—"It is not those who actually surpass mankind that are unhappy, but those who struggle in order to surpass them, and this moody temper, that eats into itself from within and provokes pain and unfair opposition from without, is generally the result of pretensions which outgo the merit by which they are supported." There cannot be a better plan than entire resignation to one's fate in matters of ambition. In this respect destiny is unerring; and a man who has eminent talents is sure to rise to the situation best fitted for their exercise, provided he has once got his foot on the ladder. If you are disappointed in gaining a place of real difficulty, rely on it, there is some defect in yourself, and either rest quiet or study to improve yourself, without blaming your fate or your superiors.'

'July 7.—The force marched on the fifth, and our party here has been reduced, which loses us two officers. The river also is up, and cuts off our friends from cantonments. The effect

is the recurrence of the old solitude and gloom of the rains. Business prevents the effect of the gloom, and most liberal applause from Government ought also to prevent my feeling its effects. I am busy with the plan of the auxiliary force, and Grant is recruiting horse.'

'*July 9.*—Southey's "Waterloo," a very easy flow of language, nothing very poetical, and nothing very feeble, no affectations, till near the end, when a glowing description of the grove of faith is followed by a prolix and prosing harangue by the muse. The best passage is one verse on remembrance of youth.'

'*July 14.*—Southey's admirable life of Nelson. It is written with the greatest simplicity and spirit, gives the strongest and clearest impression of Nelson's character, and inspires the deepest and liveliest interest in his adventures, and the warmest sympathy with his heroic desires. His great characteristics were his ardent love of glory, and his noble confidence that he should attain it, that, "he should one day have a long Gazette to himself." Yet perhaps his love of his country predominated over his thirst for fame. These leading features are set off by his humanity, his generosity, his piety, his kind and affectionate heart. These virtues beam through all his actions, so that the narrative, though plain and manly, elevates and agitates like a poem. The reader alternately glows with admiration and melts into tears. I have scarcely ever read a book with so much pleasure, and, for the hero, I should think my life too little to give for one moment's inspiration of his heroic spirit.'

'*July 21.*—I yesterday evening read some of my old letters of 1811, when I first came here. Six years have passed since, many of my plans have melted into air and I remain with no great hopes of ever enjoying any great portion of riches, pleasure, or power; but the interval has not been entirely lost; for I have learned to do without them, and console myself with the little importance of anything I could have attained. I did, however, repine at my lost time, and give way to some depression; but it was soon overcome, and I ought not to complain, if I am sometimes dejected without a cause, when I think how

often I am indifferent (to say the least) to recollections that ought to fill me with regret.'

'*July 27.*—The ratified treaty arrived yesterday. I have been at the insurrection in Candeish, and the accounts, and remainder of the cession. I heard lately from Strachey about Council, and wrote to my uncle on the subject, enclosing the testimonies of G. G.'s. Pleasant weather. I go out to-morrow evening to hog hunt, the first time since February. I quite enjoy the thoughts of it.'

'*July 31.*—I have been out of humour ever since I received my instructions, announcing Sir T. Hislop's appointment. The reason was his being nominated to finish the Poona affair, thus taking it out of my hands. I thought this was a push of Malcolm to add everything he could to his own credit. As I finished the affair uninstructed, I ought to have recovered my good humour, but did not. I fancy the truth is I was annoyed that any one should be over me, and still more that I had not the management of the Deckan in the approaching crisis. I had often thought of this (in some form of Governor-General's agency), and the wish has stuck to me, although I have not the least pretension, either from standing experience or aptitude for the duty, to contest it with Malcolm. Yet it has kept me inclined to be out of humour. It is a wretched thing in our Indian diplomatic line that we have just praise enough to stimulate ambition, without the possibility of gratifying it. This breeds bad passions and sullen reflections. I have now been reading over old 1802–3 journals, and recalling my career. I trust I have now fully discharged from my mind every feeling of jealousy and discontent, which would not only be ungenerous, but unjust and ungrateful.'

'*August 8.*—Malcolm has been here since the 5th, full of good stories, good humour and good sense. We have talked over all subjects, among others, the plan of sending Sir T. Hislop to settle with the Peshwa, which was his. It certainly was injurious to me, but I do not know that I had any claim to forbearance, especially as a plan of mine, by securing the command of the southern army to General Smith, unknowingly

frustrated Malcolm's views. He has been writing to press my uncle William to second the recommendation of Government and procure me some reward; but what reward can he procure me? and, in fact, what reward do I deserve? These recommendations will gain me all I have any right to expect, the unreserved good opinion of my relations, and perhaps a little reputation beyond their circle. *If I look for more I shall be disappointed, and, what is worse, disappointed in unreasonable expectations.* While out to meet Malcolm, we had a good day's hunting—hard riding—many accidents, and a boar and two sows killed. General Smith here, and Captain Stewart and Mr. Malcolm. Bustling, pleasant time. I wish I had some more bustle in prospect.'

'August 9.—Some most unreasonable hopes of reward held out to me, half in joke, by General Smith, have led me more fully into a consideration of my pretensions, and after reviewing my services in detail, I find it a most liberal allowance to place myself in that respect where Malcolm was in 1806, and to think that my conduct affords good hopes of my turning out as well, if I have an opportunity. There is a great deal of vanity in this, but I might be worse if I left things to be magnified in the mist of an indistinct view.'

'August 12.—Malcolm is gone. His visit has completely effaced all the bad impressions that remained on my mind. Never was anybody so frank and good-humoured. Considering his time of life, his ardour, his activity of body and mind, his inexhaustible spirits and imperturbable temper, are truly admirable, and all those qualities are accompanied with a sound judgment and a great store of knowledge, derived both from reading and observation. I remain full of anxiety to get into the thick of the bustle that is approaching. A flattering invitation from Ochterlony⁶ made me, for a moment, turn my

⁶ The proposal originated with Mr. Elphinstone. In a letter addressed to Ochterlony on June 30 with reference to some local appointment, he writes as follows:—

'You will have heard that Sir T. Hislop is soon to be up in this part of the world as a sort of Lieutenant d'Empereur for the Deckan. Malcolm accompanies him as Governor-General's agent to carry on negotiations under his

attention to being Governor-General's agent with his army. The thought was soon relinquished; but I retain a strong though vague expectation of employment in Hindustan.'

'August 20.—Out at Yewit. Two days' hard and pleasant hunting, though only four hogs killed. I still retain a vague hope of employment.'

'August 21.—I have been feeding my hopes by putting my papers, etc., in order, to be ready in case of a move. It will be useful at any rate. I read Malcolm's notes respecting Southern India, which led to Sir T. Hislop's appointment and his own. The part that relates to the Peshwa seems a mere pretext to persuade Lord Hastings to lose no time in creating an appointment so convenient for the writer, but it does not follow that I have any reason to take this amiss. Malcolm was probably sufficiently blinded by the prospect before him to think his plan as advantageous to the public as it certainly was to himself, and at all events he meant no ill and no slight to me. The object to himself was great. The effect on me was partial and incidental. It was also uncertain, and might easily be overlooked by a man occupied about himself.

'I lately read Malcolm's review of the account of the Bengal Sepoys, and to-day Worsley's correspondence regarding it. Malcolm's review is good; but I read Worsley's letters with interest and respect for his long services, sound sense, and zeal in the cause of his distant comrades. He is evidently a melancholy man, but yet one cannot but feel some dread when one finds him complaining of inability and diffidence, arising from the stupor of inoccupation and retirement, and sees him looking wistfully to India, and regretting the causes that detain him in England. This seems not uncommon with our best Indians.

orders. I suppose you will have the same powers in Hindustan as far as the neighbourhood of the Governor-General admits of it. I wish I were to be the agent under you, though of course you will negotiate as well as fight for yourself. I most sincerely wish you joy of your late promotion in the Order of the Bath, though perhaps I ought rather to wish the Order joy of you. This distinction can reflect no lustre on you, but it is a satisfaction to see it attained by a Company's servant, as you are the first of their officers whose services have called for such a reward since the great Lord Clive and Sir Eyre Coote.'

In the idleness and obscurity of home they look back with fondness to the country where they have been useful and distinguished, like the ghosts of Homer's heroes, who prefer the exertions of a labourer on the earth to all the listless enjoyments of Elysium.'

'August 25.—I yesterday settled the horse, after much thought and trouble, entirely to my own satisfaction. My only doubt is about Cunningham's knowledge of the natives and their language; and if he fails, I am sure it is owing to no wrong motive in me, as I have withstood many temptations for the sake of having him, for his good character alone. I have also settled the reduced infantry well, but not in so high a style.'

'August 28.—I wasted the greater part of the forenoon (up to one o'clock) in speculating on the time in which I could reach Allahabad if I were to get a summons to Hindustan. I reckon that I could do it with great exertion in fifteen or sixteen days. I was employed in this way when I got the order to leave Sindia's camp for Cabul.'

'September 1.—Moro Dixit with me. I was so ill in the evening as to be obliged to stay away from dinner, though I had a party.'

'September 2.—Set off at six for Singhur; lost my way, but got up by nine. I rode most part of the day. Many of the views on the river side beautifully verdant, with scattered trees. The hills wild and solitary—nothing grand. Breakfast with Captain Donnelly; walked round the fort till twelve. The air, not the view, is good, and the walk pleasant. The hill easy of ascent all round till within fifty yards or less of the top, then a ledge of inaccessible rock. It *may* be clambered up with difficulty, if *unopposed* at a breach which was repairing on the west face. The weakest points are the gateways, especially the Concan gate, which may be breached, though the battery would require to be high, and perhaps to be protected from enfilading fire by traverses. Rode home.'

'September 3 and 4.—Business, and some of Tacitus' history. I still admire the weight and wisdom of his maxims, though I now perceive the affectations of his style. In the evening rode

fifty-two miles to Weengaon by a circuitous road—set out at three and arrived at 10.30.’

‘*September 18.*—Since I returned I have been busy with the Hindustan Jageerdars, the auxiliary force, and various details. I have read most of the *Romaunt of the Rose*, which I am going on with. The plan is (as Petrarch judged it) cold and artificial; but some passages are lively and poetical, and the whole has something romantic that pleases me. The much-prized portraits of the allegorical personages give me much less delight than some of the descriptions of real life, as the restless night of a lover; which, though often attempted by the poets, was never done so well as here.

‘Within this day or two my longing after the scene that is opening in Hindustan has led me to study the geography of that country. I have read my own journal from Nagpoor to Agra, my geographical sketch, and Tod’s “*Jypoor*,” which I abstracted. I shall go on with Tod. I begin to lose hopes of active employment. The season is rapidly approaching, and I am at a distance from the scene.’

‘*October 6.*—The weather is dry now, and though hot has the appearance of the beginning of the cold weather. General Smith was to march on yesterday, or rather his gun-battery was to cross the Gore. We remain weak in this part of the country, and the Peshwa strong, and evidently disaffected; yet he will surely wait till some ill-success of ours gives him a good opportunity; and with his character it will be long before an opportunity arrives. I am very busy with the march of the force, the organisation of the auxiliary horse and foot, the southern cessions, etc. I read Ritson’s and Ellis’s romances when I have leisure.’

Malcolm’s appearance on the scene had such important influence on the subsequent crisis that I must interrupt the personal narrative with some remarks on the course of events, which are only slightly referred to in Mr. Elphinstone’s journal. We have seen that the principal object of the so-called treaty of security was to strengthen the military force at the command of the British Government, and by other arrangements to

render the Peshwa more than ever dependent on our support. In the opinion of Lord Hastings, any hostility on the part of Bajee Rao would be amply guarded against by the force under General Smith, supported by that under the command of Sir Thomas Hislop. The military operations of this great campaign were made on a scale to meet every anticipated danger from the hostility of the greater powers. The duty that was imposed on General Smith was to give a hand to the force that moved northward from the Deckan under Hislop, and at the same time to watch the movements of the Peshwa. Hostility had only been averted on the late occasion by the prompt arrival of a large portion of the subsidiary force at the gates of the capital. To advance beyond the frontier would seem a sure mode of precipitating a crisis; and this was the result of the untoward occurrence that I have now to relate.

There could scarcely be a stronger contrast than the character of the wily Mahratta whose closing scene we are following, and the joyous, generous nature of one of India's best soldiers and diplomatists, Sir John Malcolm. But they had this in common: they were both of them great believers in the power of diplomacy. It was Malcolm's weakness to rely on that address to which he had owed some of his success in life, and the confidence of successive Governors-general; but on this occasion he was no match for the Mahratta prince. He had proceeded from Calcutta, on a tour of visits to the principal native Courts, under instructions from the Government to sound and report on their dispositions and designs. In the month of August he arrived at Poona, and proceeded instantly to join the Peshwa, who was absent on a pilgrimage to Punderpoor, a place of sanctity about seventy miles distant. From a letter of Malcolm's, published in his 'Life,' it would appear that he started on this expedition predisposed to regard the late conduct of the Peshwa as a temporary aberration, the result of evil councillors, from which he was already recalled by the penalties that he had suffered. In this good motive he would be encouraged (as Sir John thought) by the language of an old friend—by the hope of regaining the favour of the

British Government, and something of the power he had lately lost. When, therefore, in the interview which followed, the same profusion of protestation and argument—which had proved ineffective in convincing Mr. Elphinstone—was again employed, it was received by one too ready to believe and to trust; and to such excess did he carry this feeling of confidence, that he urged Mr. Elphinstone, when he returned to Poona, not to allow his suspicions of the conduct of Bajee Rao to interfere with the military plans of the Government by retaining so large a force to guard against Bajee Rao's designs. Thus appealed to, the chivalrous spirit of Mr. Elphinstone gave an unwilling assent, and the greater part of the subsidiary force was directed to advance to the north, and take a part in the general campaign, while the defence of this important post was left to three weak battalions of Sepoys.

There was this to be said in favour of Malcolm's proposal, that the success of the great armies would, in all probability, determine the conduct of the Peshwa; and Mr. Elphinstone to the last cherished an expectation that Bajee Rao would not venture to commit himself by any overt act, except in the event of something untoward occurring in the North. In the meantime, however, he gained more than he could have hoped for; and he instantly took advantage of the opportunity by levying troops, and calling up the forces of his feudatories. They began to collect in overwhelming numbers, while to all remonstrance against this unnecessary display of force he had the ready reply that he was only complying with Malcolm's advice to show his devotion to the British Government by aiding in the destruction of the Pindarrees.

In his interviews with Mr. Elphinstone he evinced the deepest depression at the humiliation which he had twice undergone at our hands. He spoke of his long friendship with the British Government, and the contrast between his former prospects and his present affliction. The British Government could alone, he said, alleviate his distress. The Resident endeavoured to soothe him by reminding him of the prospects held out by Malcolm, and urging him to regain the confidence of the

Government by his conduct during the present crisis ; but in vain. His professions were belied by the levies of troops, and to such an extent were they carried, that every available man, and even pony, was brought to his standard.

In another despatch Mr. Elphinstone describes the impression made on the natives by these acts :—‘The openness and vigour of his Highness’s preparations, joined, perhaps, with some pity for his losses, and to some hope of the restoration of the Mahratta greatness, render his Highness’s cause more popular than it used to be ; and his Highness has spared no efforts to foster these feelings and raise up odium against us. Continual reports of combinations in Hindustan, of defeats of our armies, disaffection of our troops and defections of our allies, are studiously circulated and readily believed.’

In reporting these proceedings to the Governor-General Mr. Elphinstone wrote : ‘The motive assigned in all these professions is a desire to execute the plan recommended by Sir J. Malcolm ; but the troops already raised are double the number required for the service, and his Highness has taken other steps, no way connected with the defence of the country against Pindarrees. Of this nature is his studied conciliation of the Raja of Sattara, to whom he has paid attention such as has not been thought of since the power of the Peshwa was first established. He is also conciliating his brother and the powerful chiefs ; and he and all his principal dependents are careful to keep their property away from Poona.’

General Smith was so impressed with the danger of leaving his rear so slenderly guarded, that at the time of his advance from cantonments he addressed a strong remonstrance to the Government, which he placed in Mr. Elphinstone’s hands. The reply is before me, and illustrates the chivalrous feelings by which Mr. Elphinstone was influenced through this trying crisis. It should be said that it was written before the Peshwa had committed himself too far for retreat :—

‘October 5, 1817.

‘My dear General,—I have just received your official letter in answer to mine of the 1st and 3rd, and I do not hesitate a moment in withholding it till you have thought over it again. You know that the matter of it is in complete agreement with my sentiments, and I think it very disinterested in you to enter into a view of the subject which, though ultimately the best for all, deprives you of a part of your force for the present. But I really think the tone of this letter will produce ill at Headquarters; and if it does, it is not at all unlikely that they may lay hold of your strong language on the subject of keeping all safe in the rear, and on that ground fix you on the south of the Adjunttee range, thus cutting you out from a great share of the active employment, and at the same time throwing the blame on you for obstructing the original plan. I think we risk a good deal by sending all the troops out of this country after encouraging the Peshwa to put himself into a situation to profit by the absence of our troops, as soon as any checks encourage him to attempt it; but I would rather run a good deal of risk in that way than have your force thrown out of the campaign, and Sir T. Hislop’s detained to do your work. After all, I think the plan we drew out when Malcolm was here would really have been the best for all parties, but my plan will do if carried well through.

‘I shall keep your letter until I hear from you again, and then either forward it or tear it as you think best.’

While our troops were inactive in the North the new levies began to close round the cantonment, encroaching on the ground occupied by our troops, the horsemen prancing about, and evincing their hostile intent by acts of defiance. These demonstrations reached their height during the festival of the Dussera on October 19. A great military display took place, at which the Resident and the British troops were present. The marked slight with which the former was treated by the Peshwa encouraged the Mahrattas to make another display of hostility. A large body of their cavalry charged directly down upon the position occupied by our troops, wheeling off as they approached,

as if it were their object to show how completely this small body was at the mercy of the larger force that surrounded them.

The position of the British troops became one of great peril. The cantonment had been placed in the immediate vicinity of the city by Sir Arthur Wellesley, with a view to its defence; but it was surrounded by enclosures, and owing to the close proximity of the Peshwa's army an attack might have been made without a moment's warning. The position also favoured the attempts to corrupt the Sepoys. These were now openly employed, and daily brought to the knowledge of their officers by the men themselves; the fact that the families of many of these soldiers were residing in the country, gave to these attempts an importance, and alarmed even those who had the highest confidence in their fidelity.

To withdraw the troops from their dangerous position was to provoke the hostility for which the Court was preparing; but every precaution was taken short of commencing a struggle that now seemed inevitable. Against all former proposals to remove the cantonment the Peshwa had strongly remonstrated, on the plea that the city would be defenceless, and the objection was now again urged vehemently. The precautionary step, however, admitted of no delay, and Mr. Elphinstone quietly intimated to the Peshwa that Sir Thomas Hislop's orders to move the troops to Kirkee would be acted upon immediately. Orders were sent to hasten the march of a European regiment from Bombay, and General Smith was requested to send back a light battalion to the cantonment at Seroor.

The days which followed were full of anxious thoughts. Here is the description which Grant Duff gives of the doubts of one eventful night, when he stood alone with Mr. Elphinstone, and listened to the din of preparation that proceeded from the Mahratta camp:—

‘For several nights the Peshwa and his advisers had deliberated on the advantage of surprising the troops before the arrival of the European regiment, and for this purpose on October 28 their guns were yoked, their horses saddled, and their infantry in readiness. This intelligence was brought to

Mr. Elphinstone a little before midnight of the 28th, and for a moment it became a question whether self-defence under all circumstances did not require that the attack should be anticipated. It was an hour of anxiety, the British cantonment and the Residency were perfectly still, and the inhabitants slept in the complete repose inspired by confidence in that profound peace to which they had been long accustomed; but in the Peshwa's camp south of the town all was noise and uproar. Mr. Elphinstone had as yet betrayed no suspicion of the Peshwa's treachery, and as he now stood listening on the terrace he probably thought that in thus exposing the troops to be cut off, without even the satisfaction of dying with their arms in their hands, he had followed the system of confidence so strongly recommended to a culpable extremity; but other motives influenced his conduct at this important moment. He was aware how little faith the other Mahratta princes placed in Bajee Rao, and that Sindia, who knew him well, would hesitate to engage in hostilities until the Peshwa had fairly committed himself. Apprised of the Governor-General's secret plans and his intended movements on Gwalior, which many circumstances might have concurred to postpone, Mr. Elphinstone had studiously avoided every appearance which might affect the negotiations in Hindustan, or, by any preparation and apparent alarm on his part, give Sindia's secret emissaries at Poona reason to believe that war was inevitable. To have sent to the cantonment at that hour would have occasioned considerable stir, and in the meantime, by the report of the spies, the Peshwa was evidently deliberating; the din in the city was dying away, the night was passing, and the motive which had hitherto prevented preparation determined Mr. Elphinstone to defer it some hours longer. Major J. A. Wilson, the officer in command of the European regiment on its march from Bombay, had already been made acquainted with the critical state of affairs, and was hastening forward.'

By his hesitation on this occasion, Bajee Rao unquestionably lost the last opportunity of striking an effective blow against British power. The motives which led him to postpone the

attack became afterwards known when his government was subverted. He relied to the last on the success of the efforts to corrupt the Sepoys, and promised himself an easy victory without the trial of a conflict; but the weakness which prompted this policy of procrastination was well known to Mr. Elphinstone, and formed one of the elements in his calculations when he consented to two more days of uncertainty.

The day which followed this council was passed in the usual messages and remonstrances. On the afternoon of October 30 the British battalion marched into the cantonment, and Mr. Elphinstone hesitated no longer to order the withdrawal of the whole force to a well-chosen position four miles from the city, an act which both parties understood as a preparation for war. This seasonable reinforcement, and the additional security we obtained by the position of the troops, put an end to the motives which made Mr. Elphinstone desire to anticipate hostilities, and he now calmly awaited the attack, knowing the moral importance which belongs to the fact of not appearing to be the aggressor in such a conflict. In pursuance of this policy he still retained his dangerous position at the Residency, and in close proximity to the city, supported only by a slender guard of Sepoys. Rumours were rife of intended assassination, and would appear to have been well founded; but a high-minded man was not to be swayed by such fears, and the generosity of his nature prompted him to disbelieve them.⁷

Orders were meanwhile sent to hasten the arrival of the battalion at Seroor, thirty miles distant, and the Peshwa, on the other hand, added to his forces by the daily arrival of new troops. At length, on the morning of the fifth, an insolent message reached the Resident demanding the meaning of our preparations, and calling upon him to send away the European regiment that had lately arrived. This was well understood as a declaration of war, and the party at the Residency had barely time to mount their horses and retire, when the advance of the Peshwa's army, now pouring from the city and its neigh-

⁷ I have been assured by General Briggs that he disbelieved them to the last.

bourhood in every direction, showed that the long expected conflict was at hand.

To seize and destroy the Residency was the first act of the enemy. As no preparations could under the circumstances be made for a sudden evacuation, all Mr. Elphinstone's papers and a valuable library shared in the general destruction. So complete was it, that Mr. Elphinstone, reporting these events to Sir Evan Nepean, playfully remarks, 'I beg you will excuse this scrawl, but all my writing implements, with everything I have except the clothes on my back, form part of the blaze of the Residency, which is now smoking in sight.'

I must here again borrow the picturesque description of the scene which presented itself to the party retiring from the Residency from the narrative of Grant Duff, whose history, tedious while carrying us through all the windings of Mahratta intrigues, rises into animation while describing the scenes in which he took a part:—

'Wittojee Guickwar had scarcely quitted the Residence when intelligence was brought that the army was moving out on the west side of the city. There was a momentary consultation about defending the Residency, but it was instantly abandoned as impracticable, and it was determined to retire to Kirkee, for which purpose the nature of the ground afforded great facility. The river Moola, betwixt the Sungum and the village of Kirkee, forms two curves like the letter **S** inverted, The Residency and the village were both on the same side of the river, but at the former there was a ford and near the latter a bridge, so that the party by crossing at the ford had the river between them and the Peshwa's troops the greater part of the way. From the Residency no part of the Mahratta army was visible, excepting bodies of infantry which were assembling along the tops of the adjoining heights, with the intention of cutting off the Residency from the camp, and, having this object in view, they did not molest individuals. On ascending one of the eminences on which they were forming, the plain beneath presented at that moment a most imposing spectacle. This plain then covered with grain termi-

nates on the west by a range of small hills, while on the east it is bounded by the city of Poona, and the small hills already partially occupied by the infantry. A mass of cavalry covered nearly the whole extent of it, and towards the city endless streams of horsemen were pouring from every avenue. Those only who have witnessed the Bore in the Gulf of Cambay, and have seen in perfection the approach of that roaring tide, can form the exact idea presented to the author at the sight of the Peshwa's army. It was towards the afternoon of a very sultry day, there was a dead calm, and no sound was heard, except the rushing, the trampling, and neighing of horses, and the rumbling of the gun wheels. The effect was heightened by seeing the peaceful peasantry flying from their work in the field, the bullocks breaking from their yoke, the wild antelopes startled from sleep bounding off, and then turning for a moment to gaze on this tremendous inundation which swept all before it, levelled the hedges and standing corn, and completely overwhelmed every ordinary barrier as it moved.'

Then ensued one of those scenes we are so familiar with in Indian history. The Sepoy battalions, who had resisted the attempts to corrupt them, now supported by the presence of British troops, and led by British officers, advanced with alacrity to meet the coming host, and added to the list of triumphs of discipline over irregular forces however apparently overwhelming. The affair which followed scarcely amounted to a general engagement. The Mahratta horse overlapped the British troops, and a bold attempt was made by a large mass of them to destroy a Sepoy regiment that had advanced too eagerly beyond its supports. It is said that at this critical moment the Peshwa, true to his character, sent an order to recall his instructions to begin the engagement; but Gocla, who commanded the army, a sanguine and impetuous chief, suspecting the nature of the message that was approaching, instantly ordered a battery to open fire, and precipitated the collision which was now inevitable. The British force stood firm and had almost repelled the cavalry attack before the line could be brought into action. Whereupon the vast array of the

Mahrattas, foiled in this attempt, and daunted at the steady advance of the British line, fell back to their old position, and the little army which had gained a victory, the importance of which was not to be measured by the losses sustained on either side, remained masters of the field.

This brief narrative of the events which closed with the battle of Kirkee will, I think, lead the reader to return with increased interest to Mr. Elphinstone's own record of his hopes and fears during this singular crisis:—

‘Oct. 8.—No news from Hindustan, but things there are drawing to a crisis. I have given up all hope of being employed. This renders my life less interesting, and I half dread the flatness of this time last year. Some things which have since amused me, I now look on almost with disgust. . . . I must keep up my relish for society, for hog hunting, and for all kinds of enterprise and activity, and avoid the strange, torpid, solitary, shy habits I had fallen into last year. Nothing tends more to misery.’

‘Oct. 17.—I have been very busy with the Carnatic sessions, the Beels of Sautpooree, and the Peshwa's plans to debauch the Sepoys. Close is going on at Sindia's Court with admirable good sense and firmness. We shall probably have no war. At all events, I shall have no active employment, but must stay here and watch stale conspiracies. I to-day finished Orme's fragments. The matter good (but for petty details of the operations of the . . .⁸), the style abrupt and affected, and full of pedantic and unauthorised words. Sivajee seems to have been much abler than any of the present Pindarree chiefs, but he had great advantages in the division of the Mohammedan power, in Aurungzebe's wars with the Affghans, the Rajpoots, and the kings of Golconda and Bijapoor, besides the revolts of his sons, and the distrust and inefficiency to which they led. Never were conquerors with fewer qualities to excite either admiration, attachment, or esteem than the Mahrattas. We go on well enough, but less pleasantly perhaps than in the rains, when

* Illegible.

our party was larger, and we used to have cards in the evenings. So humble are our enjoyments.'

'Oct. 21.—The day before yesterday was the Dussera. A fine sight; 10,000 horse out. We have begun parties again, and last night had a very pleasant one.'

'Oct. 22.—The Peshwa arming openly, and even ostentatiously. Innumerable reports and alarms of plots, conspiracies, mutinies, and assassinations. The truth seems to be that his Highness wishes to set others by the ears, and be ready himself to profit by any ill success of ours.'

'Oct. 27.—After all kinds of warnings of plots against my life and the public peace, I have at last obtained clear and distinct information of intrigues carried on by the Peshwa with our troops, to support which he has almost surrounded our cantonments with his camps. The necessity of seeming friendly here while negotiating with Sindia prevented my resisting these dispositions. Trimbukjee is in arms again, and the whole country is in alarm. This is certainly the most embarrassing situation I have ever been placed in, and is of course accompanied with much anxiety; yet I never wish I were anywhere else. I look forward to the honour of defeating all these plans. I confidently hope, if I can get over this night and the two next, that I shall extricate myself and all here with credit from our perilous situation. In the meantime I have destroyed some of my own secret papers, and am ready for the worst. The Peshwa could not have chosen a better night for a surprise, as it is a perfect tempest of rain and wind.

Παννύχιος δέ σφιν κακὰ μήδετο μητιέτα Ζεὺς,
Σμερδαλέα κτυπέων.⁹

'Oct. 31.—Knowing what the Peshwa could do, and not what he would, I had an anxious time till the 29th, when I put the troops on the alert and hastened in the Bombay regiment. Our preparations produced similar ones on the Peshwa's part, and hourly expectations of attack all night. Yesterday the European regiment marched in, and to-morrow our brigade

⁹ *Iliad*, vii. 478. All the night the all-wise Zeus resolved on evil to them (the Trojans), thundering fearfully.

encamps at Kirkee. We shall then be able to stop the intrigues with our Sepoys, perhaps to punish the emissaries and those who have joined them.¹ On the 29th, when just making up my mind, I was full of ideas of the glory of quelling mutinies and dispersing hostile armies, when everything seemed so much against us. Now that I see how little the Peshwa did do, I am abashed at the reduction of my own projects. "From the sublime to the ridiculous is but a step."

'The removal of cantonments took place as intended, and was followed by the utmost exultation and insolence on the part of the Peshwa's people. Mr. Shaw was speared and plundered at Gunaishkind on the evening of our removal. Our cantonments were exposed to all sorts of depredations without any discouragement from the Government. The Peshwa's troops marched and paraded close to the Sungum as if to overawe us. All business was at a stand, and the language and conduct of the Court was haughty and almost hostile. This conduct and the distance of our force gave us an appearance of weakness that elated the natives, and began to depress our own people. In the meantime Moro Dixit's warnings to Ford, and other indications, left little doubt of the Peshwa's design to surprise us. I had waited so long in hopes of a treaty with Sindia setting all to rights, but it appeared that my tameness invited aggression. I therefore remonstrated in moderate language, and ordered in the Light Battalion. At the same time the Peshwa heard of General Smith's concentrating at Fooltumba, which he did of his own accord, and in consequence he determined to attack us immediately. The morning of the 5th began with great preparations on his part, to which I was now so used that I disregarded them. No preparation was made at the Sungum, and the ladies who had returned there remained undisturbed. Some explanations, however, made things seem more serious, and towards noon the Peshwa's intentions became very doubtful, when a battalion of Major Pinto's² moved out

¹ What follows is written in a smaller handwriting, and evidently after the affair of Kirkee, which took place on the 5th November.

² Major Pinto commanded a battalion in the Peshwa's service,

and took up ground between us and the old cantonment, as if to cannonade the Sungum. This created great uneasiness; and, unwilling to bring on a crisis, I remained perfectly quiet until half-past one, when Wittojee Naik came to demand the reduction of the brigade to its old force, and to announce the Peshwa's intention of withdrawing to his army if I did not comply. I of course refused, and he told me his Highness was off. Till now I had determined not to leave the Sungum, but to avoid that decided step to the last, and to run the chance of defending myself if attacked.

'The Peshwa having now decided for himself, I told Wittojee I should leave the Sungum when the Peshwa left the town. I still, however, hesitated, in the idea that he would not dare to go to war; but I sent off the ladies, and withdrew the detachment from the cantonments, and by the time they arrived such bodies of troops were moving out to cut us off from camp that I had no choice left but to withdraw. We crossed the river near to Clieland's bungalow, leaving our horses, books, letters, manuscripts, and everything but the clothes on our backs a prey to our enemies.

'While the detachment was crossing, which took some time, I and some of the other gentlemen kept an eye on the enemy, who advanced very near the hills by Gunaishkind. Grant went to the hill near the caves and saw them pouring out of the town, and filling all the plain between the river and the hills. All this sea of horse was still, except for the trampling of their feet and the neighing of their horses. At length we crossed ourselves, and the whole detachment moved off towards camp, in expectation of having a hard battle to fight, before we reached it. Nothing of the sort, however, took place. We seemed not to be perceived, and as we had a river between us and the enemy, we marched on quietly enough towards the bridge. Some of the enemy came down and began to ford as we advanced, which led to some firing, but no damage was done. At the bridge we met a reinforcement, and after arranging for the security of those who were behind, I rode on to the line. *Finis.*'

The narrative, which closes thus abruptly, is crowded into

the last pages of a volume of journal. It leaves the party at the moment of their joining Colonel Burr's force. I give the sequel of the story as reported to his friend Close, the Resident at Sindia's Court.

'Private and Confidential.

(To Captain Close.)

'Camp, Kirkee, Nov. 11, 1817.

'My dear Close, -I make no doubt you are astonished at my long silence, and perhaps think I am murdered, or that the communication is quite cut off. The truth is, I did not like to trust your dawk with my secrets for fear of their being intercepted, and so influencing Sindia's resolutions. Now these are no longer any secrets, and I sit down to write to you. The Peshwa, under cover of Malcolm's desire that he would raise troops, got together a large army at Poona (about 25,000 horse and half as many foot). These he encamped towards Garpeer, pressing on and almost surrounding our brigade. He had long since set to work to corrupt our Sepoys, and pushed on with increasing vigour and publicity. In short, everything tended to a rupture, and it was necessary to watch the moment when it would break out. On the arrival of the Bombay European Regiment, I moved the cantonment to this delightful position, and felt quite relieved when I saw it established here; but the impression made in town, and diligently encouraged by Gocla, was that the Feringees had fled before the invincible arms of Sreemunt, and would soon be clear out of the country. These feelings were shown with great insolence, our cantonments were plundered, a gentleman was wounded and robbed of his horse at Gunaishkind, and it became unsafe for an officer to ride even between our old camp and our new. Moro Dixit warned Ford of an approaching attack, in which all our Sepoys were to leave us, and offered to save his life if he would remain quiet in Dapooree. The Peshwa treated every application I made to him with contempt, although I had complained of troops coming near us in our old ground.

We were scarcely out when the Vinchoorkur sent 1,500 horse to skirmish, and have a sham fight between the Sungum and the Sait's Garden. Muddun Singh Pindarra came with 700 or 800 horse to the place where the dead are buried, and sat half-an-hour examining the Sungum at his leisure, while we were at breakfast, and Gocla pushed on 20,000 men and threatened to form a camp on the river in front of Garpeer. All this could not be borne without leading to more insult, so I very prudently remonstrated and ordered in the Light Battalion from Seroor. About the same time General Smith of his own accord concentrated on Fooltumba.

‘The Peshwa, who had perhaps been flattered by Gocla that all his preparations would be made without his getting into a scrape, now saw that he must throw off the mask. Accordingly he sent a very bullying message to desire I would move the cantonment to such place as he should direct, reduce the strength of the Native Brigade, and send away the Europeans; if I did not comply, peace could not last. I refused, but said I was most anxious for peace, and should not cross the river towards Poona, but if his army came towards ours we should attack it. Within an hour after, out they came with such readiness that we had only time to leave the Sungum with the clothes on our backs, and crossing the river at a ford under Clieland's, march off to the bridge with the river between us and the enemy, and a little firing but no real fighting. The Sungum with all the records and all my books, journals, letters, manuscripts, &c. were soon in a blaze, but we got safe to the Kirkee bridge, and soon after joined the line. While the men and followers were fording, we went ourselves to observe the enemy. The sight was magnificent as the tide rolled out of Poona. Grant, who saw it from the height over the powder cave, described it as resembling the Bore in the Gulf of Cambay. Everything was hushed except the trampling and neighing of horses, and the whole valley was filled with them like a river in flood. I had always told Colonel Burr that when war broke out we must recover our character by a forward movement that should encourage and fix our own

men, while it checked our enemies, and I now by a lucky mistake,³ instead of merely announcing that the Peshwa was at war, sent an order to move down at once and attack him. Without this, Colonel Burr has since told me he certainly would not have advanced. However, he did advance, we joined, and, after some unavoidable delay, the Dapooree battalion joined too—2nd Comp. 1st-7th-Europ. Regiment, 2nd-1st-Dap. Batt. When opposite to the nullah, where there used to be a plantain garden, we (injudiciously I think) halted to cannonade, and at the same moment the enemy began from twelve or fifteen guns. Soon after his whole mass of cavalry came on at speed in the most splendid style. The rush of horse, the sound of the earth, the waving of flags, the brandishing of spears, were grand beyond description, but perfectly ineffectual. One great body however, Goela and Moro Dixit and some others, formed on our left and rear, and when the 1st-7th was drawn off by its ardour to attack Major Pinto, who appeared on our left, and was quite separated from the European Regiment, this body charged with great vigour, and broke through between it and the European Regiment. At this time the rest of the line was pretty well occupied with shot, matchlocks, and above all with rockets, and I own I thought there was a good chance of our losing the battle. The 1st-7th, however, though it had expended all its ammunition, survived the charge and was brought back to the line by Colonel Burr, who showed infinite coolness and courage, and after some more firing, and some advancing, together with detaching a few companies to our right towards the little hill of Gunaishkind, we found ourselves alone in the field, and the sun long set. I was at first for advancing to the water at the Sait's Garden, but was persuaded it was better to return to camp, which it

³ This 'mistake' is more fully explained in a letter to Grant Duff after the appearance of Colonel Blacker's memoir of the war, published in 1821. Mr. Elphinstone reminds his friend that Grant had while crossing the river proposed that he should desire Burr to advance. Mr. Elphinstone sanctioned the request, though he considered it unnecessary, as it had been already arranged between them that the moment the war began he should do so. The letter is given further on at its proper date.

was. If we had not made the move forward, the Peshwa's troops would have been quite bold, ours quite cowed, and we doubtful of their fidelity. We should have been cannonaded and rocketed in our camp, and the horse would have been careering within our pickets. As it is, the Peshwa's army has been glad to get safe behind Poona, and we have been almost as quiet as if encamped on the Retee at Delhi. We did not lose 100 men altogether, and we have quite set up our name again. Our life here is delightful—no plots and cares, but idling, looking through spy-glasses, and expecting another field day. That the Peshwa should not give us one before General Smith comes in (which he will by the fourteenth) is incredible, but the Mahrattas are unaccountable animals. At least he will bring down his guns (for he has many, though there were few in the action) and give us a distant cannonade, keeping his cavalry ready to profit by any confusion. I hope our troubles may not make Sindia go wrong. We shall settle everything after a few sieges. Send this to Adam, who may not have got my letter. Moro Dixit was killed—poor fellow! Yours, &c. 'M. ELPHINSTONE.'

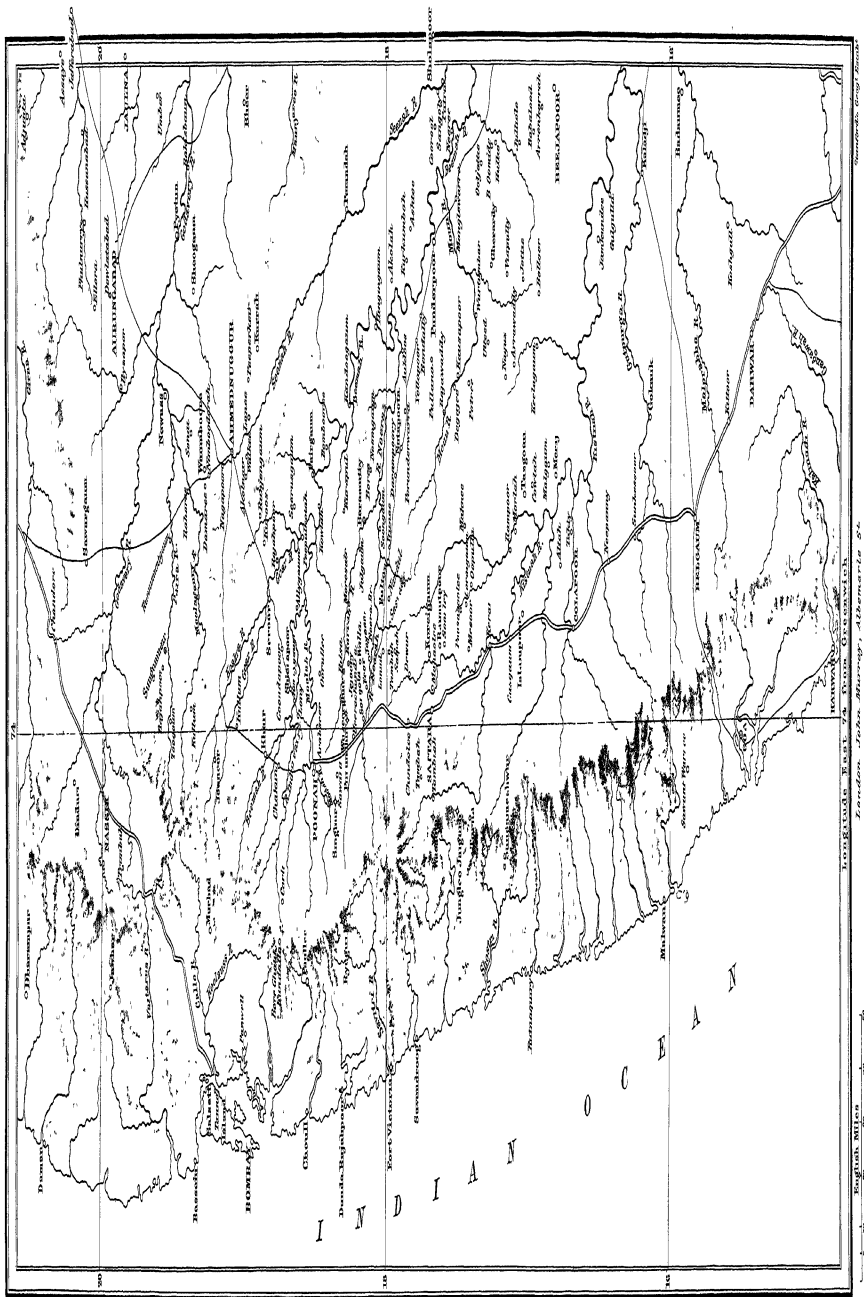
The honour of the day was by the general assent of his contemporaries assigned to Mr. Elphinstone, and there seems no reason to question the soundness of the judgment so pronounced. His position as resident gave him a control over the troops, and all the antecedent arrangements were made by his advice, even to the choice of the ground on which the battle was to be fought. Whether the advance of the troops was, as he expresses it, 'a lucky mistake,' or the fruit of the previous counsel to assume the offensive on the outbreak of hostilities, the fact is undoubted that to the boldness of the advance of the small force and to the noble fidelity of the Sepoys under circumstances of unexampled trials, we owe the success of the day. It is not necessary to suppose, nor is it likely, that he interfered with the movement of the troops during the action. There was no rivalry at the time, nor need there be now. Colonel Burr, who was suffering from a para-

lytic seizure, in his report of the action acknowledged the obligations he was under to Mr. Elphinstone for his counsel, and many years afterwards I heard from Mr. Elphinstone's lips an account of some of the principal incidents in the engagement, and from his description of the gallantry and energy displayed by the crippled old soldier, one would have supposed that Colonel Burr and not Mr. Elphinstone was the hero of the day.

I cannot close this chapter more appropriately than by quoting the graceful terms in which Mr. Canning referred to Mr. Elphinstone on moving a vote of thanks to Lord Hastings and the army at the conclusion of the war.

‘While the campaign was proceeding thus successfully against those whom Lord Hastings had taken into account as probable enemies, their number was unexpectedly increased by the addition of the Peshwa, the executive head of the Mahratta Empire, who suddenly broke the ties which bound him (as has been seen) in the strictest amity to the British Government. Even Sir John Malcolm—better qualified, perhaps, than any other person to fathom the designs and estimate the sincerity of the native powers—had been so far imposed upon, in an interview with that prince at Poona, as to express to Lord Hastings his perfect conviction that the friendly professions of the Peshwa deserved entire confidence. In the midst of this unsuspecting tranquillity—at a moment now known to have been concerted with the other Mahratta chieftains—the Peshwa manifested his real intention by an unprovoked attack upon the Residency (the house of the British Resident) at Poona. Mr. Elphinstone (a name distinguished in the literature as well as in the politics of the East) exhibited, on that trying occasion, military courage and skill which, though valuable accessories to diplomatic talents, we are not entitled to require as necessary qualifications for civil employment.’

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



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